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The New Statesman and Nation, January 9, 1932

The Drink Report

THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION

Incorporating *The Athenæum*

Vol. III. No. 46 (New Series) **SATURDAY, JANUARY 9, 1932** [Registered at the G.P.O. as a newspaper] **SIXPENCE**

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SHOOTINGS and riots, raids and arrests, have begun in India. The Congress is proscribed and its leaders are being bundled into prison. We are trying, in short, what our whole policy since the war has been designed to avoid, the policy of "resolute government." Mr. Gandhi, of course, may be quite pleased to be in prison; he was in an impossible position, torn between his desire for moderation on the one side and the violence of his supporters on the other. But for us and for those out of prison in India things look about as black as they can be. There are two very remote possibilities of avoiding chaos and bloodshed. One is that the imprisonment of the leaders and the dissensions among the rank and file will cool the ardour of the Nationalist movement throughout India. That apparently is what the Government of India hopes. But what case is there in the whole course of history of a Nationalist movement yielding for any considerable length of time to a policy of repression? The other possibility is that the Round Table Committees, when they get to work next month, will satisfy Indian aspirations. But is that really a chance while so many of the leaders of Indian opinion are being put into gaol?

* * *

Our Die-hards, of course, are pleased by these swift and stern measures of repression. They only want rather more of them—deportations, seizures of funds, and other vigorous methods of stamping out sedition or protecting "our good friends the Mohammedans." But where does all this get us to in the end? It is absurd to talk as though the problem in India is how to put down a mutiny. The India of to-day is not the India of the 1850's. Nor is India Cyprus. We are confronted with a national movement such as we had to face a few years ago in Ireland and again in Egypt. It is, no doubt, far more complicated, but fundamentally it is the same, and we shall have sooner or later to give way now as we did then, for the simple reason that we cannot afford the cost, even if we had the stomach for it, of governing by the sword. For the moment we are responsible for order in India, and we must keep order. But if in the next few months we can make no progress in coming to terms with the Indians—the Hindus as well as the Moslems, the Congress party as well as the Princes—then in our own interests we had better give ourselves notice to quit.

* * *

The news from Paris, as we write, is not very stimulating. The French will probably ask for the Lausanne Conference to be postponed till January 25th. The pound has dropped a few more points. Sir Frederick Leith-Ross is about to resume his discussions with the French Treasury. M. Laval is no nearer meeting Mr. MacDonald. The French press, which not long ago was accusing Britain of trying to prevent a Franco-German *rapprochement*, is now girding at

Germany for interfering with the Anglo-French *entente*. The Young Plan, of course, remains sacrosanct; but France may be prepared in a passion of generosity to concede a two-years moratorium on Germany's conditional annuities. Against this there is a strongly supported opinion in London, which holds that there should be no attempt at a settlement at Lausanne. Let the Conference adjourn, it is urged, till the summer, when the French general election will be over and when economic conditions will have become clearer for better or worse. Nothing will be lost by waiting; a premature attempt at a settlement (or what the politicians call a settlement) may land us all in further difficulties. If the Americans had not turned their backs on the business, if the French and the Belgians were in a different mood, if, in short, there were any chance of disposing for good and all of the curse of reparations and war debts, there would obviously be no argument for delay. But in the present circumstances it may be a wise proposal.

* * *

Most of us have rummy Governments and Parliaments nowadays, and dwellers in glass houses should beware of throwing stones. But we cannot forbear to express a mild surprise at the fiddling of the American Neros. A few weeks ago Congress mesmerised itself and the country with the chorus of "Not a dollar off the debts." Now the Democrats have started a hymn of their own—the revival of an old refrain—the burden of which is "Down with the tariffs." A marvellous idea! But it is somewhat simple of English papers to regard it as a prelude to lower duties. Nothing is less likely. The Democrats—who co-operated eagerly in creating the present system of prohibitive tariffs—do not want a serious downward revision, and are not strong enough to force one if they do want it. Their party, however, has a low tariff tradition, and it is probable that many people still vote for Democratic candidates because of this tradition. Therefore it is good business to make occasional protests against Republican tariffs, and even to reduce the duty on a few commodities such as horse chestnuts or coloured cigarette papers.

* * *

President Hoover is not much more helpful. He croons another message to Congress about the need for immediate action to improve the economic situation, and to "replace unjustifiable fear by confidence." But the action he contemplates consists mainly in an ingenious scheme of financial manipulations between bankers and industries—a pill to cure an earthquake. Mr. Hoover is, we suppose, one of the most timorous Presidents the United States has ever had, and we cannot understand why there should be any chance of its having him again next November. But apparently there is. Meanwhile we shall watch with interest the effect of his incantations on the "unjustifiable fears" of American bankers, farmers, business men, and workless workers. Europeans can only leave the Americans to take in each other's laundry until circumstances make them realise that they are part of a world economy.

* * *

Fierce clashes between strikers and the Civil Guard have brought Spain into the limelight again this week. This outbreak of discontent and lawlessness, which is not confined to one district, is a serious embarrassment to the Government; but it is perverse to blame the Government for it, as some of the critics do, nor do we believe that it forebodes a new dictatorship, to suggest that it threatens the Republic. Señor Azaña and his colleagues admittedly have a hard task before them. The revolution of last April, followed by the drastic reform of the constitution, has stirred some sleeping dogs and unchained others that were pretty wide awake. Large promises have been made that are yet to be fulfilled, and the Cortes will have their work cut out in the coming session in passing laws on Church and State, on regional autonomy, on education, on marriage and divorce, on the land question, and in dealing with the Budget. Democracy is not yet established in Spain, except on paper, and party politics as well as economic difficulties may check the rate of progress. But there are no signs that the Republic is in danger, or even that, though the gilt is off the gingerbread, the gingerbread has lost its savour for the great mass of Spaniards. Regrets for the old monarchy and hopes of a new one are equally futile.

* * *

Except in Birkenhead, where an unofficial dockers' strike is in progress, the waterside workers have generally accepted the wage-reductions recently agreed to by their Trade Unions. But the Port of London is held up by a strike of watermen and lightermen, and ships which are waiting to be unloaded in the river and not at the wharves cannot be touched. The lightermen have a separate Union of their own, which broke away from the amalgamation some years ago; and the strike is the result of a ballot vote of their members, despite their own executive's advice to accept the terms. Watermen who belong to the Transport Workers' Union have apparently ceased work in sympathy, though their Union has signed the new agreement; but the general body of dockers remains at work, and there is no sign at present of the strike spreading. The watermen claim that, despite their high skill, they get lower wages than the stevedores and than a good many of the dockers, and that they ought for this reason to be exempt from the reductions. As ships which come direct to the wharves are still being unloaded, the hold-up is not very serious; and it is not easy to see how the lightermen can hope to win, if the struggle is to be settled purely by a trial of strength. But on their published statements they do appear to have a grievance, and there should be room for compromise. Meanwhile, Londoners need not worry about any shortage of supplies, and perhaps Mr. Runciman may even rejoice at a further check to imports.

* * *

Representatives from the Governments of the chief coal-mining countries have been meeting this week to discuss the ratifying of the recent international convention on miners' hours. This is a very modest affair, fixing a maximum shift of seven hours and three quarters from break to break—that is to say, including both winding times—and it is to be hoped that there will be a general agreement to bring it into operation. Certainly Great Britain has far more to gain than to lose by ratification. There have been persistent reports of late that our National Government has definitely decided not to ratify the Washington Eight Hours

Convention applying to industry generally. We are loath to believe this, until it is officially announced. As for the Mining Convention, the immediate results of our backing out of it would be even more unfortunate. Everyone knows that the European coal problem needs tackling on international lines; and this Convention on hours is the first fruit of the efforts of the League of Nations and the I.L.O. to foster co-operative action among the coal-producing countries. It is only a beginning; but it is imperative that a beginning should be made.

* * *

The Westminster is the first of the big banks to issue its accounts for 1931, and as these have been eagerly awaited, there is room for comment. All the banks have, of course, suffered considerable losses during the past year through the fall in the value of the securities they hold. In America and in several other countries these paper losses have been so great that special permission has been given to the banks not to write them off, in order to avoid balance sheets showing a heavy deficit. The Westminster Bank, on the other hand, has written off the full depreciation in Government securities by an appropriation from its published reserves, and presumably its inner reserves are quite sufficient to meet other forms of depreciation. Dividends are reduced, but only from 20 per cent. to 18 per cent. for the year. Bank statements do not tell the public much; but it is at least evident that the Westminster, while it has felt the effects of the depression, is still in a quite secure position, and the same can be said of the Big Five as a whole. Our banks are not, like those of America and some other countries, large holders of industrial shares, and consequently their paper losses are on a quite manageable scale. Indeed, the Westminster's figures rather bear out the view that our bankers have learned the art of prospering in slumps as well as booms. They are not wholly immune from the effects of a world cataclysm like that of 1931; but in comparison with most other types of business they are very comfortable indeed.

* * *

It is easy to be wise after the event, and our economic experts are now offering us perfectly convincing explanations of the continued low level of prices; but if anyone had told us, when we went off gold, that most retail prices would now stand at a lower level than has obtained for years we should have regarded him as a charlatan. Yet such is the position. In spite of the external depreciation of sterling, commodity prices have on the whole continued to fall, and the winter sales are marked by the offer of bargains unprecedented, we believe, since the war. The explanation of this phenomenon is that the force of the world's "economic blizzard" has not yet spent itself; purchasing power is everywhere still contracting, to the advantage of a comparatively wealthy country like ours. The other side of the picture is exemplified by the hunger-queues in America's once prosperous industrial cities; by the eight million pairs of boots which the Czechoslovakian "boot king" cannot sell; and by the news that, in parts of Austria, the starving populace is consuming its very dogs.

The Income Tax "drive," of which we hear so much, is amply explained by the revenue returns issued on December 31st. Mr. Snowden's revised Budget in September provided for a revenue, to March 31st, estimated at £784.7 millions, and an expenditure only £1.5 million less. By the end of the year £598.3 millions had already been spent and only £394.5 millions of revenue collected, the deficit disclosed being thus £203.8 millions. At this period of the year there is always a considerable lag of revenue behind expenditure, as income tax is not payable until January 1st; but it is significant that this year the deficit exceeded by £23.2 millions the corresponding deficit of 1930. This difference is approximately covered by the proceeds of the Chancellor's raid on the Exchange account, which has still to be brought into revenue. But only prompt and full payment of the three-quarters instalment of income tax now due can avert another Budget catastrophe; and, even so, there remains the possibility that the estimates err on the side of optimism.

* * *

Some years ago Mr. Henry Ford wanted to find out what wages he ought to pay to his employees in different countries in order to enable them to maintain a uniform standard of living. He approached the International Labour Office, and asked it to undertake an inquiry; and the result is now published as a report, the cost having been borne by the American Twentieth Century Fund. The figures are interesting, though they refer to January 1931, and have been affected since then by the widespread abandonment of the gold standard. The I.L.O. took not whole countries but certain selected cities, and tried to find out the relative cost in each city of maintaining a standard of living based on that of the workers in Detroit. Of European cities, the figure worked out highest for Stockholm, which was at least as expensive as Detroit. Costs in Berlin, Frankfurt, Paris and Marseilles were all substantially higher than in Manchester, where they were from 70 to 74 per cent. of the costs in Detroit. The Berlin figure was from 83 to 90 per cent., and that of Paris from 80 to 87. Copenhagen and Cork were also far above Manchester; Rotterdam and Warsaw a few points below it, Antwerp and Barcelona substantially below. Of course, any conclusions of this sort are subject to a wide margin of error; but most people will be surprised to find our costs of living relatively so low, and disposed to wonder how long they will remain low if we resort to a thorough-going protectionist policy.

* * *

We have seldom read a more contemptible story than that of the hunted deer which three times took to the sea to avoid the gentlemen of the Mid-Kent Stag Hounds. These gentlemen met with their dogs and horses and the deer arrived in a cart. "The moment it was liberated it began to graze." On the subsequent proceedings the best comment was that of the coxswain of the Hythe lifeboat who said that the sea was too rough for him to rescue the deer in a lifeboat and that anyway if the deer was in the sea "it was better off dead than alive." Apparently these hunting gentlemen were not technically breaking the law because this deer was not technically a domestic animal. The sooner such cruelty is technically illegal the better.

THE DRINK REPORT

THERE are two kinds of Royal Commission—the small Commission of persons who are supposed to have no axes to grind and who are expected speedily to produce a report upon which action may be taken, and the large Commission of persons representing all the different interests involved, who are expected to take a very long time in bringing out a number of reports which will provide the Government with excellent reasons for doing nothing. When the Royal Commission on Licensing was appointed two years ago, it was at once recognised that the Government had in this case chosen the latter alternative. Everyone laughed. Here were Labour, Liberal and Conservative points of view represented on the same tribunal: here sat the extreme teetotaller cheek by jowl with the brewer and the publican. Obviously no agreement would be reached; obviously nothing would come out of such a jolly mixture; obviously the drink question was satisfactorily shelved for another decade. But the result, now that the Commission has reported, is surprisingly good.

For the Commission has tackled its problem in a sensible spirit and that, in the matter of drink, is as unusual as a display of reason in dealing with sexual problems. We are not told that it is sinful to drink alcohol, nor that it is wicked for the State to think of owning a diabolical industry. (That outrageous argument has bedevilled all discussion of the drink problem for generations, but the fact that the State in any case takes a large profit out of taxing drink has perhaps at last shamed its advocates.) The abomination of prohibition and the almost equal abomination of local option are quickly dismissed by the Commissioners. Nor are we worried by the scarcely more helpful view that the decline in beer-drinking means the ruin of old England.

The Commission has dealt with drink neither as a sin nor as a romantic glory, but as a necessary trade which, badly administered, is the cause of many social evils. They recognised that the decline in drunkenness is due not only to restrictions on drinking, but to the growth of different and healthier ways of spending leisure. They might have said outright that good housing would make more difference than all the other reforms put together. They see that the evils which still exist are to be remedied not by increased restrictions but by the more rapid reduction of redundant licences—since where there are too many public houses most of them will be wretched little drinking shops, where there are fewer the publicans can afford to provide decent accommodation—and by the transformation of the public house into a place of refreshment where families can go and drink alcohol (or other beverages if they prefer them) without being thought disreputable by their censorious neighbours. This is a hopeful prelude to a more intelligent attitude to the problem of drink.

The Commission is not, of course, all of one mind. Mr. Whitbread, representing the brewers, has written a delightful little report of his own, the gist of which is that, since drunkenness is in any case diminishing from natural causes, restrictions should be diminished too. Indeed, Mr. Whitbread would like to end the Carlisle experiment in State control, if that were practicable, to extend public house hours and generally to make the world safer for the brewer. Nor is the majority report, which most of the members of the Commission have signed, really unanimous. It is followed by a considerable number of reservations. Mrs. (now Lady) Ernest Simon has also written a separate report, but her differences from the majority are not due to differences of principle. They are due to pluck, an independent spirit and a preference for a detailed scheme. The one Liberal member of the Commission, she is dissatisfied with the mere acceptance of the principle of public ownership which has conciliated the Labour signatories of the majority report and she offers of her own initiative a complete Socialist scheme of nationalisation.

The important thing about this report is that so various a body of people have been driven by the facts to admit that nationalisation is the right solution. The majority state that public ownership is "theoretically sound" and that experience in Carlisle—in Carlisle the public-houses are owned by the State and publicly managed to the general satisfaction of the inhabitants of Carlisle—"has gone far to show it to be sound in practice also." But they regard nationalisation here and now as impracticable and suggest—in spite of the fact that Carlisle is a convincing experiment—that public ownership should also be tried elsewhere "in circumstances which will submit the system to a further test both in a social and in a financial sense." Lady Simon states with unanswerable force the arguments which the majority report have hesitatingly marshalled. She goes through the objects which the majority report agree with her in thinking desirable and argues that these objects cannot really be accomplished except by a comprehensive scheme of public control.

In this she seems to us demonstrably right. No doubt, there is something to be said for the Commissioners who the majority report suggests should be appointed to advise, help or push the Justices into more activity, and the annual report which, it is proposed, they should present to Parliament might have its uses. But the majority report offers no answer to Lady Simon's argument that the root evil of the present administration is that the brewer is a business man who must "maintain as large an output of beer as possible," and that the tied house system "is one of the results of this policy." As a consequence the publican "in his own interest must push the sale of beer" and neglect "a general refreshment trade which, in itself may be profitable." She sums up the situation admirably when she says:

> The question finally resolves itself thus. Is it in the public interest that the business of the manufacture and sale of alcoholic liquor—an article which has great potentialities for harm if taken in excess—should be run by people whose main object must be to sell the largest possible amount and so to make the largest possible dividends for their shareholders, or should it be in the hands of a public corporation, limited as to dividend, and acting under statutory instructions to improve the conditions under which alcohol is sold, to meet but not to stimulate the demand for intoxicants and to develop the general refreshment trade in public houses?

Public ownership is the only possible solution. Lady Simon's own scheme is a regional control, similar in many respects to that established in Mr. Morrison's Road Traffic Act. It may not be in all respects a sound scheme. Beer and transport have their differences, and the financial arrangements of Lady Simon's scheme may not, on detailed examination, prove satisfactory. In transport, comparatively few big corporations were in control and an indefinitely expanding service could be relied upon. The drink trade has still a highly complicated organisation, and compensation would necessarily be calculated on the basis of a diminishing revenue. But here, at any rate, is an intelligent scheme to bite upon. Here, too, is a majority and a minority report in favour of public ownership. The Labour and Liberal Parties have at last the chance to end their absurd internal controversies about the drink trade: to cease discussing schemes of local option which they will never dare to put and never really desire to see in operation, and begin their discussion on the basis that the drink trade is above all trades the one which is most obviously in need of nationalisation. It is only under a scheme of public control that the many evils which are fully discussed in the report can be satisfactorily tackled. Therefore the only thing to consider in the future is the best way of nationalising.

LANCASHIRE'S PROBLEM

IT seems an odd world in which a great industry is being seriously advised that its prosperity is most likely to be restored by the deliberate destruction of a large part of its producing power. We have indeed grown used in recent years to economic doctrines that seem to have been born in Bedlam for the use of lunatics; but even so we should in most cases continue to regard any project of this order with the deepest scepticism. The way back to prosperity cannot be to organise in order to produce less: it must be to find ways and means to allow the world to employ fully its increased and increasing power to create goods for human consumption. Any other view is, in general, clearly insane; and, even if destruction of plant and limitation of output may suit the present interests of some particular trade, they cannot, as a general policy, do anything but harm.

But the case of the cotton trade, where a scheme of this sort is now being strongly urged upon the master spinners by the authority of a Joint Committee representing all sections of the industry, is admittedly peculiar. Most bodies of manufacturers do believe that if—a very big if—world prosperity could be restored, all their reasonably efficient plant and enough workers to operate it would be again fully employed. But the cotton trade is not in this position. Assume the fullest imaginable revival of trade, a revival that would reduce unemployment in general to, say, two per cent. There would still remain in Lancashire a very large number of unemployed workers and a large quantity of plant that could not be fully used. The dimensions of the British cotton trade have shrunk permanently, and quite apart from the effects of the world depression. Never again, it is safe to say, will foreign countries buy British cotton goods on anything like the scale on which they were buying them before the war. For cotton manufacture is, in the cheaper branches, a trade very well suited for carrying on with cheap labour and almost fool-proof machines; and no conceivable reduction of Lancashire's costs could go far enough to get her back a large part of her lost markets. The Far East with its infinite supply of cheap labour is bound more and more to supply its own markets. America will increasingly exploit the negro and the "poor white" for some time to come; and in the better classes of cotton goods, where skilled labour still counts, there is bound to be more and more competition from artificial silk and other textile fabrics. In fact, unless Lancashire thoroughly reorganises her methods, she may lose a good deal more than she has lost already to competitive exporters with lower wage-costs and substitute products, and also as a result of rising protective tariffs against her goods.

All this is by now generally admitted, and it does constitute a quite special case for scrapping plant that has become definitely and permanently redundant. If no collective action were taken to bring this about it would doubtless happen in the end as a result of bankruptcy and obsolescence. Firms cannot go on producing for ever at a loss, and plant wears out. But the experience of the past decade has shown how desperately slow and painful, under modern conditions, this process of economic elimination is. Firms struggle on somehow as long as they can just meet their standing charges, or can borrow in order to meet them; and in the cotton trade plant lasts a long time. The doctrinaires who are in favour of leaving the scaling down of the cotton trade to "natural" economic forces are far fewer to-day than even a year ago.

But it does not follow that the latest scheme for the reorganisation of the industry will have an easy passage. The scheme demands the use of compulsory powers, which will have to be secured from a Parliament sceptical of State intervention in industry. The owners of the plant marked down for scrapping will have to be bought out, and this will involve a compulsory levy on all the survivors. In Lancashire itself the tradition of individualism is still very strong, and the number of separate firms inconveniently large. A minority of employers may prove strong enough to wreck the scheme if it comes before Parliament. The levy will be an addition to the standing charges of the industry, and everyone knows that these charges are already far too high. There will be opposition on this ground from firms which believe in their own ability to carry on, and also from others which dare not face even a penny more on their standing charges. The difficulties in the way are thus formidable indeed; and yet a good many people are saying that, if this plan is allowed to be wrecked as a dozen others, good or bad, have been wrecked before it, there can be for Lancashire no real hope at all.

In any case the present scheme is only a first step towards the reorganisation of the cotton industry. To destroy surplus plant will not of itself reduce costs nearly enough to enable Lancashire to secure an expanding world trade. Even the very great fall in her prices in foreign markets which has followed the depreciation of the pound has brought with it only a small stimulus to exports. Presumably, but for this factor, exports would have fallen off sharply during the past few months. But the fact remains that under present conditions no one way of reducing costs and prices, however considerable, is likely to be effective as a stimulus to trade—much less to trade at an adequate margin of profit. Other methods are also needed.

The Lancashire employers' answer is that they are already trying other methods. At this moment the entire spinning section of the trade is without a collective agreement, owing to the employers' action in terminating the agreement of 1919 and demanding not only wage-reductions, but also the abandonment of the forty-eight hours working week. The master weavers have not joined with the spinners in this policy; but they are pressing the "more looms per weaver" solution upon the operatives in their section of the trade. There is in both sections a strong attempt to reduce wage-costs.

But this problem is not easy. It is out of the question for any body of organised workers in this country to agree without a struggle to give up the forty-eight hours week. This is generally regarded as the maximum civilised standard for working hours; and it is only as a result of the folly and supineness of a series of British Governments that it is not already the legal maximum. Certainly an increase in British working hours beyond forty-eight would produce disastrous repercussions in other countries; and the futility of increasing the hours of work at a time when almost everyone is under-employed hardly needs exposure. In effect, the attempt to increase nominal working hours is simply an indirect attempt to reduce wages; for it would mean the scaling down of piecework prices so as to fit the longer working week.

The real question is one of wages, but the cotton operatives are already, because of under-employment, living on wages lamentably low, even in relation to those paid in other trades. If lower nominal wages carried a firm assurance of fuller employment, or of a guaranteed weekly minimum wage, they would probably be quite prepared to accept them. But in face of the vast surplus of labour and plant there is no such assurance.

In the "more looms per weaver" controversy the position is much the same. The weavers are not really standing out against working more looms; they know that is bound to come. They are asking for a guaranteed wage as a condition of accepting the new system, because they see that otherwise, with a reduced volume of employment available, actual earnings are likely to be pressed down to an intolerable level through the application of short time. There will be no fewer weavers, and each weaver will get through more work. If the work is shared out, as it is to

a great extent now, no one will be able to earn a living wage.

The elimination of surplus plant and the granting of a minimum wage would both lead to the same result—the fuller employment of fewer factories and of far fewer workers. A large part—perhaps even a half—of the whole number of workers in the cotton trade would in the end be completely squeezed out and compelled to seek employment elsewhere, or to stop working altogether. In the long run this is certain to happen; for the short-time system is uneconomic and will have to go. But it is a nasty medicine to swallow, and only bitter experience has prepared the operatives' minds for its acceptance. Perhaps they are not well prepared now; but the leaders who quote their policy recognise that the change is bound to come. Earnings cannot be cut further, and therefore, just as surplus plant must be eliminated, so must surplus workers.

But this is not all; for the most urgent part of Lancashire's problem has not yet been mentioned at all. This is the writing off of dead capital, the unshackling of the industry from its monstrous burdens of bank debts and other standing charges, and its thorough reconstruction on a basis of far larger business units. Until this is done, neither the scrapping of plant nor the diminution of surplus workers will avail to put the trade again on its feet, even on the greatly restricted scale which has to be accepted as inevitable. In short, the problem is many sided, and ought long ago to have been compulsorily handled by a powerful body authorised by Act of Parliament to deal with it in all its aspects. In default of this, it has to be tackled piecemeal, with the inevitable result that it is tackled badly, because no section is prepared to make sacrifices unless parallel concessions are to be made by the rest. If there are, as the present scheme implies, to be compulsory measures, would it not be best even now to make one bite at the cherry, and give whatever body may be set up power not only to put redundant plant out of action, but also to handle the related matters of surplus labour and the minimum wage, and of financial reconstruction and the freeing of the industry from its impossible burdens of dead capital and standing debt?

C. P. SCOTT

THE innumerable tributes to C. P. Scott have all emphasised his courage and integrity, his humanitarianism, and his championship of unpopular causes. They have neglected, I think, his no less remarkable astuteness, his diplomatic gift, his caution, his capacity for compromise, his knowledge of when to strike and when to forbear. Mr. Scott had something of the fox in him, as well as much of the lion. He was no champion of lost causes; he was, on the contrary, the benignly Machiavellian advocate of causes which less far-sighted men thought lost or Utopian. He could claim, above all, that he had been right—right about the Boer War, right about Home Rule, right about Women's Suffrage, right about the Peace Treaty, right about a host of other smaller causes which we have forgotten because they have been won. The influence of the *Manchester Guardian* was due to the fact that the causes it took up were never run as stunts, taken up in the hot mood and dropped in the cold; they were clearly imagined lines of policy, consistently and moderately pursued year after year, boldly urged in season, persuasively advocated out of season, but never abandoned until victory was achieved.

Every newspaper lives by appealing to a particular public. It can only go ahead of its times if it carries its public with it. Success in journalism depends on understanding this public. But success is of two kinds. Northcliffe had a genius for understanding his public, and he used it for making money, not for winning permanent influence. He became a millionaire because he was his own most appreciative reader; he instinctively appealled in the most profitable way to the millions of men and women whose tastes and prejudices were the same as his own. He lived by flattering. He did not educate or change his public in any essential; he merely induced it to buy his papers.

Mr. Scott succeeded in a different way. He had just as much *flair*, just as acute an understanding of his public as Northcliffe. But his relation to it was a professional, not a commercial relation. He taught his public to trust his integrity, to rely on the facts he told them, to respect his judgment and to listen to his criticism. He offered his undivided services. I remember his saying that there was a definite moment in his life, the equivalent of a religious conversion, when he dedicated his life wholly to his paper and the causes it served. He was a political expert who succeeded in earning his salary (he took a salary, not a fluctuating dividend, from the *Manchester Guardian*), but who put his reputation as an expert above financial success, and who on more than one occasion risked the prospects of his paper rather than withhold his honest opinions. But he would never have made the astonishing position he did for his paper if he had not understood the psychology of his readers; if he had not possessed a quick sense of what they would stand and what they would not stand. The *Manchester Guardian* would not have survived the Boer War had it not been cautious and courteous as well as outspoken. Mr. Scott only occasionally went "all out"; he kept something in hand—which explains why occasional outbursts of passionate indignation and even rarer attacks on individuals were so effective in the *Manchester Guardian*. I never met anyone else who possessed Mr. Scott's capacity, either in conversation or on paper, for clothing a completely damning criticism with elaborate, old-fashioned courtesy.

There is another aspect of Mr. Scott which, I think, has not been sufficiently appreciated. He was one of the last of a peculiarly English type—the successful, cultivated, public-spirited Puritan man of affairs. Of this type (which has flourished most among Quakers and Unitarians) Mr. Scott was the most urbane and the most tolerant. His judgments were intuitive and moral, and his whole outlook that of the Puritan. His mind did not work easily in the realm of abstract ideas, nor did he in the least understand the artist's approach to life. But he encouraged artists and had the greatest respect for philosophers. The arts were to him like the splendid flowers which were made to grow in such profusion at his home in Fallowfield. They were not essentials, they were ornaments. But they were ornaments without which he thought life poor and which he wanted all to share.

He loved Manchester, which he was fond of comparing with London—a wretched place, as he once remarked to me in deep indignation, where "there is no public spirit. Why, they have not even made their gas and water into municipal services!" But he was conscious of the ugliness of Manchester; he hated Philistinism, and never ceased to complain of the smoke-laden atmosphere, the filthy slums, and the dreary architecture. He set out to make his paper a centre of intellect and of culture, and his success was no less remarkable on the literary, dramatic and musical side than it was on the political.

Mr. Scott's achievement—to have given a small provincial paper a unique world reputation, and built on the basis of a local Lancashire circulation an organ of criticism and of thought which no one of intelligence could afford to miss and which people speak of with respect, and indeed with something like awe, on farms in the Middle West and in remote villages in the Balkans—this is an achievement which, when one thinks of the practical obstacles, seems almost miraculous. I know of no achievement in the last century to surpass it. The best of such achievement is that it is permanent; that the paper is still there, as alive and as honest

as ever, and that even those who do not have the sense to read it, are saner, more tolerant and more intelligent because its sanity, tolerance, and intelligence have become part of our national inheritance. B. K. M.

A LONDON DIARY

OFFICIAL censorship has not prevented ominous rumours about the real nature of the very extensive disturbances which took place after the murder of a police inspector in Chittagong some months ago. I had already been told on very good authority—British, not Hindu—that they were not "race-riots" of the usual type, but that they began as "reprisals" carried out by the police. I have now received a remarkable document—"The Report of the Non-official Inquiry Committee" on these disturbances. This inquiry was carried out by a group of well-known Indians, one of them a member of the Round Table Conference, one a professor, and others until recently members of the Bengal Legislative Council. Their report contains the evidence taken from numerous witnesses and is supported by a large number of photographs of looted shops and injured persons.

* * *

Their findings are that the disturbances following the murder of the police inspector were "the result of concerted action by European non-officials, European officers and Mohammedan police," and that the subsequent looting was carried out "with the knowledge of the local authorities and at the instigation of the police." These statements may prove exaggerations, but they cannot in any case be disposed of by the curt denial which is all the reply they seem to have received from the Governor of Bengal. There is only too much other evidence of the growth of a species of "black and tannery," permitted by the authorities and encouraged in well-known newspapers. Thus the Calcutta *Statesman* is quoted as saying that "if the existing Government cannot discharge its functions, they must prepare means for finding another," and other articles suggest that it is now time for Europeans to get together to meet terrorism "by terror." It is clear that one of the immediate dangers in India is a widespread and semi-official effort to "keep order" by methods for which the British Government itself could not admit responsibility.

* * *

The current issue of the *Political Quarterly* is an exceptionally interesting number. Its *pièce de résistance* is an outspoken article on the crisis of last autumn by Lord Passfield, in which the peculiarities of Mr. MacDonald as a leader and a colleague are very faithfully exposed. Long before the fateful days of August, the Prime Minister was out of harmony with the Labour Party. He did not conceal his loathing of its "troublesome sections," and he was "very much aware of the shortcomings of each one of his colleagues . . . as well as perhaps incessantly rather too conscious of his own superiority?" He was open to flattering suggestions from other quarters. And finally, in the supreme hour of difficulty, he quietly dropped his friends and transferred himself to those other quarters. On the Sunday night he left the Cabinet empowered to tender to the King the resignation of himself and all the Ministry. On the Monday morning he returned to inform his astonished colleagues that they were out of office, but he was in—for he had actually "kissed hands" as Prime Minister of a National Government. I suppose that Mr. MacDonald would demur to Lord Passfield's interpretation of the facts. But the facts—these and others that are mentioned in the article—remain the facts, and they are not very nice ones. The whole episode has a certain resemblance to Mr. Lloyd George's *coup* in 1916. It has this important difference, however, that it has not broken the Labour Party to pieces. Lord Passfield indeed regards the Labour Party as "consolidated and purified" by the withdrawal of Mr. MacDonald and his little band. And he thinks—as who does not?—that the "National" Government will, before the expiry of the term of the new Parliament, become Conservative "through and through." Will Mr. MacDonald, I wonder, end up as a Conservative Prime Minister?

* * *

I attended a very interesting Conference this week. It was a B.B.C. Conference of Group Leaders. These groups are a remarkable development of the B.B.C.'s educational work and have been formed all over the country to listen to special educational talks. They listen collectively and after the talk have a discussion. Sir John Reith told me that at the beginning of 1931 there were over 1,000 groups, and by the end of the year the number had increased by 35 per cent. The object of the Conference was for the group leaders to meet the lecturers and to discuss with them the technique of this new form of wireless education. I was much impressed by these group leaders, male and female. Of all classes, they formed a remarkably intelligent and independent body and their criticisms of the talks and of the B.B.C. were to the point and, at times, extremely outspoken. Nothing could be more salutary for the B.B.C. than the existence within it of this democratic organisation of consumers.

* * *

By the by, this week's musical programme from Savoy Hill confirms what I said last Saturday about the degeneration in the standard of music supplied by the B.B.C. There is hardly one piece of first-rate music included in the evening programmes. They are full of third-rate English music, and in order, I suppose, not to show up the quality of our native product, when foreign music is included it, too, is mainly third rate.

* * *

One hears so much about the incompetence of the Post Office, and particularly the telephone service, that it seems only fair to record one's own favourable experience. During the last twelve months I have had installed in my house (1) electric light, (2) a wireless set, (3) the telephone. The two first were undertaken by private firms and I had endless trouble and disappointments. The electric light company always took three weeks longer than they had promised. The wireless set was delivered two weeks after it had been promised and then immediately blew up because the engineer had assumed that my main was alternating, when in fact it was direct, current. Contrast this with the telephone service. I applied just before Christmas to have it installed in a country house. All I had to do was to fill up a printed form—no correspondence, no interviews. The installation necessitated a new wire for about a mile. Work began on the Tuesday after Christmas. On Thursday an inspector arrived and politely apologised for the delay. By the following Monday I could telephone.

* * *

Exhibitions serve, as Bacon might have said, for delight, for instruction, and for warning. The Soviet educational exhibition, which is being held from January 2nd to 10th in the Hall of the University of London Union, is certainly a very entertaining and informing sixpennyworth. Books, diagrams, pictures, plans, models, specimens of children's work—all these can be seen in plenty, and visitors who want to know more than their eyes tell them will find experts there to explain. The warning of this show is for those superior or frivolous people who think that it does not matter what Russia is doing. The cultural campaign of the Communists has two outstanding features, a new realism and a new idealism. One of its aims is not merely to teach the masses to read and write and to encourage scholars to pursue scholarship, but to create a race of skilled and alert workers for factory and farm. And the other is to imbue the millions of boys and girls who pass through the schools and universities

with the principle of putting service to the community first and their own personal interests last. This ambitious experiment may be criticised on one ground or another, but only a fool would ignore it. There is more matter for concern in the exhibition in Bloomsbury than in imports of Siberian butter.

CRITIC.

THE PRONOUNCERS

MANY people say that we are in danger of becoming over-organised. Many people, on the other hand, say that we are in danger of collapsing into chaos. Others, with greater show of reason, say that we are in danger of both.

I myself see signs of the march towards chaos in the revival of the controversy over the right pronunciation of Latin. It is not that I have any objection to Nero's philologising while Rome is burning; Nero is probably as usefully engaged in that as he would be in anything else. But it seems an extraordinary thing that learned men should be able to dispute so dogmatically about a matter that can never be possibly settled—a matter, too, of which any settlement will serve, provided it is accepted by everybody. I may say that I know nothing whatever about this business of Latin pronunciation, and I have never studied at length the arguments on either side. But I gather that no man living knows how Virgil pronounced his own name, and that the fight among the scholars has been raging largely over the discovery that he pronounced it with a "We."

One thing we do know, however. Virgil's music is somehow audible to those who understand him, whatever system of pronunciation they have been brought up on. Virgil himself might scarcely have understood a word of the *Aeneid* if he had heard it read aloud by a modern scholar, and would not have recognised his own language in any of the pronunciations that have been taught in the schools. Hence, the sane thing to do would surely be for scholars all the world over to agree upon one mode of pronunciation and let it be taught universally. This is a matter in which it is better for everybody to accept the third-best than for each man to stand out for an imaginary best. A statesman once said to his cabinet that it did not much matter what they said if they all said the same thing. Within limits, this cynicism is true even of politics. It is certainly true of the pronunciation of dead languages. To quarrel over the point is to prefer chaos to order where order is most desirable.

I myself took the simple course of believing that the pronunciation which I was taught first in my Greek and Latin classes was the right one. At school I was taught to pronounce the Greek "ou" to rhyme with "coo," and the Greek "au" to rhyme with "cow"; and that seemed to me to be perfectly natural. I was not such a bigot, however, that I objected to change, and when a professor of Greek taught me afterwards to rhyme the Greek "ou" with "cow," and the Greek "au" with "caw," I adapted myself easily to the new pronunciation, and found Homer as excellent a poet in the one as in the other. Coming to England, however, and going to see a Greek play at Bradfield, I heard Greek pronounced in a third fashion, which seemed to me distinctly wrong; and I have heard that there is still a fourth way of pronouncing it, which must be wrong if only because it is the fourth. All this seems to me to be the result of freakish individualism in the world of scholarship. It is as if we were to invent a number of provincial dialects where they did not already exist merely for the love of bringing disorder into speech. Probably, some logical phoneticians will arise to press the matter further, and will help to multiply chaos by pointing out that Homer must certainly have differed from Sophocles in pronunciation as much as a Highland peasant differs from a London dandy, the moral being that we must pronounce every author according to the dialectical variations of his own place and time. And we might apply the same principle to the pronunciation of English in reading the great poets, compelling the children in the schools to adopt an imaginary Elizabethan pronunciation as they make their reluctant way through *The Merchant of Venice*. I seem to remember reading somewhere that Shakespeare's pronunciation was so different from our own that he would have found it extremely difficult to follow a modern production of one of his plays. This may well be so, but it is no reason for trying to pronounce Shakespeare's language as Shakespeare pronounced it. We should lose more of Shakespeare than we should gain by attempting it. What we know is that the Glasgow man to-day reading Shakespeare in his own accent gets as much from Shakespeare as though he were master of the phonetics of Elizabethan English. The plays of Shakespeare might seem odd to most of us if performed with a Scottish or a Yorkshire accent in the theatre. But it is only because, for many purposes, such as those of the theatre, it has been generally agreed upon to accept one form of Southern English speech as standard English. This, on the whole, is a good thing, as it prevents our attention from being distracted in the theatre by a babel of strange accents from all parts of these islands. Few audiences could take seriously a performance of *Hamlet* in which Hamlet spoke with a Cork brogue, Ophelia in the accent of Greenock, the King in the Bradfordese of Jess Oakroyd, the Queen as a Cockney, the Ghost as a Somerset man, Horatio in what is known as the "refaned" accent, and Laertes as an American. Here we want order—not individuality in trifles. And, as a result of this order, we can all, whatever our accents, enjoy a good performance of Shakespeare—when we get it—in an English theatre.

The world, however, at the present time, is in two minds as to whether it prefers order or disorder. We see this dubiety everywhere, from politics to phonetics. We see it in the widespread fear of mechanisation. We see it in the constant criticisms of the B.B.C. for helping to destroy the infinite variety of English speech by appointing announcers who speak in the manner of London. There is an eager desire on the part of many people to preserve all the existing dialects against a monotonous Londonism. I confess I should be sorry to hear everybody in every county speaking with exactly the same accent. But I see no danger of this. Even if everybody tried to speak with the same accent, the attempt would be a failure. If every school in England, Scotland and Wales had a staff of teachers bent upon bringing up the children to speak the present Londonese, it would still be possible to trace the sweet influences of Aberdeen, of Yorkshire, of Glamorgan, of Devonshire in the speech of those children when they had grown to maturity. You cannot destroy these local differences by the most powerful machine on earth. You can use people as machines for purposes of war or for purposes of industry, but only for a time. The human being revolts, and regains his individuality. At the same time, it is no bad thing to aim at being as mechanical as possible in small things—to restrain one's individuality from excess in such matters as clothes, food, and speech. Even in manners, how much is gained from the fact that we all agree to do certain things in the same way! How miserable a fiasco a dinner-party would be if we were not all, more or less, ready to eat the same things! And it is much the same in pronunciation. The more mechanically uniform it is the better. Especially in the dead languages. The world will always remain an agreeable chaos, however much we try to make ourselves as like as a row of pins. To pronounce Latin and Greek in three or four different ways, however, will only help to make it a disagreeable chaos.

Y. Y.

"PSYCHIC BIDDING"

"Mr. Lenz's yell . . . has dramatised the frayed nerves of mankind."—Y. Y.

"WHY did you make such rotten bids?" The cry
Of one redoubled, in the agony
Of five no-trumps against him, also serves
Subtly to dramatise *our* jangled nerves
Who play life's game, and lose, and lose again.
Wherefore to Europe's statesmen I complain:
"Why did *you* make such rotten bids? Your call,
'Grand Slam in Reparations!' leaves us all
To keep on paying for the *coup* you planned—
A psychic bid, with nothing in your hand.
You plunged on 'Local Pacts,' and then you went
One timid trick upon 'Disarmament';
And when the Conference meets, we'll find, no doubt,
You'll let the militarists call you out
And bid us up on 'Bombers.' Blindly bold,
No bullion in your hands, you plunged on gold,
And lost as usual—leaving us to pay
And curse your overcalling; while to-day
You've doubled 'Tariffs,' and I think you'll find
The unregenerate instincts of mankind
Will soon re-double. (That's a curious game
Where those who lose or win both pay the same.)
Oh yes! your bids are psychic right enough—
If that's the modern term for naked bluff;
Just like your play—the delicate *finesse*
That lands us, every Conference, in a mess;
For life's like Bridge, it very seldom pays
To try to be *too* clever. Go your ways;
Play a straight game, safe, prudent, wisely bold,
And strive to understand the cards you hold;
Lest the bored nations whom you have betrayed,
Their nerves, like Mr. Lenz's, badly frayed,
Should rise upon you with the raucous yell
'Why *did* you make such rotten bids?' Farewell!"

MACFLECKNOE.

Correspondence

THE "FIRM HAND" IN INDIA

To the Editor of THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION.

SIR,—There must be many Conservatives with Indian experience who, like myself, bitterly regret the haste with which the Government of India arrested Mr. Gandhi. In London Mr. Gandhi was the honoured guest of the British Government. Whenever he wanted information about the safeguards which the Government was anxious to impose, the India Office was always willing to give it him. He was a free man in London, and he should have been a free man in Bombay, because the Government had not announced that the Irwin-Gandhi Pact was at an end. Mr. Gandhi asked for information about the Bengal Ordinance. It was as reasonable that the Government of India should furnish Mr. Gandhi with information about the Bengal Ordinance as it was reasonable that the India Office should furnish him with information about the financial and commercial safeguards. The Bengal Ordinance was imposed on the eve of the plenary session of the Round Table Conference for offences that took place several weeks beforehand. Mr. Gandhi was certainly not alone in his desire for information.

Mr. Gandhi's first message to the Viceroy, I admit, was silly. Lord Willingdon's reply was even sillier. If Mr. Gandhi's telegram threatened civil disobedience, the Viceroy's reply made civil disobedience inevitable. The Welfare of India League, which has a large English membership, asked the Viceroy, at the eleventh hour, to grant Mr. Gandhi an unconditional interview. The Indian Liberal leaders made the same request. This request the Government of India ignored. It slighted the most important allies it was likely to have in its fight against the Congress. The English official who lives in New Delhi does not feel the personal inconvenience of boycott and civil disobedience; but the English business man in Bombay is likely to be driven into bankruptcy. I have too many friends in the business community of Bombay to welcome their sacrifice at the altar of a false prestige.

Hitherto, I believed firmly that, armed with the Prime Ministers' declaration, we could fight the Congress party successfully. I was even inclined to favour the "firm hand" if civil disobedience were renewed. But I never thought that the Government of India would ignore its own allies. It is now clear to us all that, whether or not Mr. Gandhi wanted peace, the Government of India wanted war. We may not realise the folly of precipitate action just yet. In the interval a retired Viceroy, endowed with a marquisate, will attend a dinner given by my party, which, by the way, could not agree to give a dinner to Lord Irwin. I believed it possible to create a national freedom compatible with Imperial security too. I did not desire to see its prospects ruined by stupidity. But for years India has been a great country dominated by little minds.—Yours, etc.,

9 King's Bench Walk, The Temple, E.C.4. J. R. GLORNEY BOLTON.

To the Editor of THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION.

SIR,—Frequent complaints have been made in the British press that murderous attacks on Englishmen in India are not condemned by the Nationalists with the whole-heartedness that one would expect from the leaders of a non-violent movement. The statement is unfortunately true not only of the Congress and the irreconcilables, but of most Indians *in* India. May I make a brief comment?

Indians suspect that in India there is justice between Indian and Indian but not between Indian and Englishman. British juries have often acquitted Britishers accused of fatal assaults on natives by returning the notorious verdict: "Death due to accidental rupture of enlarged spleen." Where the jury dared not ignore the glaring evidence the judge let off the accused with a mild sentence or a fine. Thus the feeling has grown that Englishmen in India hold Indian life very cheap. If a political situation can be dealt with either by negotiation, which costs time but saves life, or by "firmness" which saves time but costs life, the English official prefers to save his time at the expense of Indian lives. The value of human life depreciates East of Suez. "A London woman stoned" in Calcutta brings more readers to the Lords Rotherbrook than sixty-five Red-shirts shot in Peshawar on the same day. We do not remember Jallianwalla Bagh because it was a massacre. There have been bigger massacres of Indians—by Indians. We remember it because of the ostentatious approval of it by Englishmen in India.

Very few condemned it and characteristically they called it a "grave error of judgment," but not a brutal massacre. Thus there grew up a feeling in India that the only thing which could compel the Englishman to respect Indian life was retaliation.

I have merely analysed this feeling which I have heard expressed among Indians of all classes, including even high officials of State. But analysis is not justification. I consider it a dangerous and deplorable symptom, not only on account of the unfortunate victims, but because it reveals the beginnings of a callousness which forebodes nothing but evil for the mental calibre of the race. But Englishmen should reflect how far it has been brought about by the behaviour of their countrymen in India.—Yours, etc.,

Cambridge. S. D.

KENYA

To the Editor of THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION.

SIR,—I read in your last issue a review of Dr. Norman Leys's valuable and much needed book, *A Last Chance in Kenya*. I would like to add to what you have said some criticism of what is, perhaps, a small point, but in which many who are working for the good of the Africans would disagree with him. I refer to his failure to realise that a study of anthropology is essential to the development of a satisfactory state of affairs in Africa. It is quite true that some people have used for their own ends the assertion of the anthropologists that there is much good in tribal organisation and ways of life, and that to interfere with any of them is to disrupt the whole. This has been used as an argument in favour of withholding from the African all the benefits of our civilisation, but not, as would logically follow, in favour of freeing him from our systems of taxation and wage-labour, nor, alternatively, of attempting to substitute something for what he is losing. Obviously, people who argue in this way would have found some other science equally useful if anthropology had not existed. It is not necessary, because of them, that anthropologists should discontinue their very valuable work of discovering in what ways African society differs from ours, for we cannot help

the African to change and adapt himself to the new conditions if we have no notion from what he is changing.

Dr. Leys admits that anthropology has a certain very limited use, but he fails to realise that it is indispensable to those responsible for the future of the African. The successful "man on the spot" has always some knowledge of native customs and outlook on life, even if only from his own observations, and all know that it is quite impossible to educate and develop the mass of the native people without it. It is advisable, too, for educationists and administrators to realise that contact with white men has had a disintegrating effect on tribal life; for the difficulties they encounter will not seem so discouraging if they recognise them as partly due to the fact that native society has lost its old cohesion and found no substitute. There are a small number of individual natives, exceptional either for high mentality or for lack of the average human being's conservatism, who assimilate the new culture quickly, but the masses can only be steered through the adaptive process by one who thoroughly understands their whole outlook and way of life. The danger of Europeanising only the exceptional individuals and leaving the masses untouched is very great. In this way a body of men would be produced who understood our European government and economic systems sufficiently well to consider that they could run the country, and to whom it would be hard for fair-minded people to deny the right to try; but it would probably be beyond their powers owing to the gap between them and the rest of the community. Thus a situation would arise that would rival the Indian one in difficulty of solution.—Yours, etc.,

20 Litchfield Way, N.W.11. C. M. LAWRENCE.

THE CHALLENGE TO FRANCE

To the Editor of THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION.

SIR,—Perhaps the writer of the leader on this subject could enlighten us on the following rather important point. Sir Josiah Stamp has just stated that one of the most important principles laid down in the Dawes Plan was omitted in the Young Plan, viz., the clause which made Germany's payments depend on the world price-level index. As he justly remarks, the absence of that governing clause is one of the many reasons for the present position.

May one ask who it was that insisted on the omission of this clause against the advice of the British representatives of whom Sir Josiah Stamp was one? It may be that the answer would only add another link to the chain of circumstantial evidence against France as set out in Dr. Einzig's informing treatise on French financial policy, and is of great importance.—Yours, etc.,

2 Elm Place, S.W.2. M. SIDNEY PARRY.

[The main idea in the Young Plan was to link German reparations with the European war-debts to America, and in the payment of the latter there was no question of the amounts varying with the world price-level index. The French did not press for the abandonment of this clause. Neither the Germans nor the British Treasury pressed for its retention.—ED. *N.S. & N.*]

INVENTORS AND WAR

To the Editor of THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION.

SIR,—Your reviewer might well describe *What would be the character of a New War?* as the most terrible book ever written; he would have had still further justification if he had mentioned something to which he does not allude.

If anyone were to read of the inventions described apart from their actual context he could only conclude that they were the product of a diseased and criminal mind, and would expect the Governments to deal with the inventors as they do with motorists driving to the danger of the public, and to take good care that the inventions were suppressed. As it is, however, these inventors are encouraged and paid by Governments.

Can it any longer plausibly be maintained that preparations for warfare tend to protect or defend anybody? Has not the time come for those who think that human history on this planet is worth going on with to protect and defend themselves from those who one might have thought would be regarded as an international gang of criminals? How they could do so is a question for new statesmen—the old ones do not seem to help us much.—Yours, etc.,

Bilsdale Vicarage, Yorkshire. GILBERT CLIVE BINYON.

THE DOUGLAS THEORY

To the Editor of THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION.

SIR,—Mr. Hobson, in his review of Major Douglas's *The Monopoly of Credit*, rejects the latter's analysis of price-building on the grounds that the manufacturer does not repay his overdraft at the bank out of the proceeds of (say) the first month's production, but repays it at the end of some longer period, during which he pays interest on the overdraft.

I do not appreciate how the duration of an overdraft can alter its *qualitative* effect on price-building, although it will obviously affect its *quantitative* influence. Or does Mr. Hobson mean that the majority of overdrafts are not repaid at all? Possibly some of your readers who have access to statistics on this matter can tell us the average life of an overdraft.—Yours, etc.,

72 Westbury Road, New Malden. R. WENTWORTH.

To the Editor of THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION.

SIR,—I must admit finding great difficulty in following Mr. Hobson in his review of *The Monopoly of Credit*, by C. H. Douglas. He has treated a dynamic process as a static one, and in this way has ignored the vital point which the author has emphasised repeatedly in his book. This is that the *rate* of flow of purchasing power does not equal the *rate* of flow of prices, i.e., "the mill can never grind with the water that has passed."

The concept of purchasing power merely as an amount of money available is totally inadequate and misleading. In the physical sciences power is defined as the *rate* of expenditure of energy. Thus any concept of power must comprise a time factor as well as a quantity factor; and purchasing power is the rate of expenditure of money or, in other words, the amount of money which changes hands in some arbitrary unit of time.

True economics (as distinct from the specious stuff which is usually dished up under that name) is essentially a mathematical science and this means that many of its processes may be readily described mathematically, but yet be almost impossible of conception by the unaided imagination.

To Mr. Hobson, as a critic, I see two ways open—either he must take the line that the mathematics of Major Douglas are unsound, in which case the onus is on him to justify his assertion by pointing to the fallacy; or he must show that mathematics is inapplicable to the problem.—Yours, etc.,

40 Moor Mead Road, St. Margarets-on-Thames. L. E. WARD.

THE NEW GOVERNOR

To the Editor of THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION.

SIR,—As one who has known Mr. Harold Brown (the newly appointed Governor of the B.B.C.) intimately for something like twenty years, I read with regret the comments of the writer of "A London Diary" in your issue of the 2nd inst.

The references to him as "a certain Mr. Harold E. Brown" and "a worthy solicitor" are a mild form of sarcasm. The writer goes on to say that what is wanted is a public man of known personality and wide outlook.

Mr. Brown's failing—if it be a failing—is that he has neither the desire to be a public figure nor the flair for skilful self-advertisement which often contributes so much to bring a man into prominence. Without doubt, however, he "has the goods": he certainly possesses the personality and the wide outlook which your contributor would welcome. My first thought in reading of his appointment was that of admiration for the Government in having looked below the surface.—Yours, etc.,

London. DEFENDER.

[Critic writes: I am fully prepared—as I said—to believe everything good of Mr. Brown and I am glad to see him so well spoken of. I only doubted whether he possessed the particular qualities that are wanted at this critical moment in the B.B.C.]

MUSICAL TARIFFS

To the Editor of THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION.

SIR,—The prevailing winds of blind nationalism seem to have shaken Mr. Lloyd James off his balance. In his letter of remonstrance to Mr. Turner he refers to "the knowledge that the home-produced scientist is as good as the foreign article," and in the same sentence indicates his approval of the presence of

language barriers which keep out foreign scientists and scientific works. Why, incidentally, the need for such language barriers to protect our scientists if they are as good as those from abroad?

If we are to accept Mr. Lloyd James's statement of the position, what are we to make of the old saying that "science knows no barriers?" Can it be that the members of the Royal Society secretly gnash their teeth when a foreign scientist announces a discovery on which they were themselves working? Can the laboratory really be the scene of the fierce partisanship expected only from a low type of football crowd? Can the Taten Observatory be rendering Japanese men of science a dis-service by publishing its reports in Esperanto? Or is Mr. Lloyd James himself placing a large and very smelly herring across the faint path of international co-operation?—Yours, etc.,

3 Malham Road, S.E.23. J. F. O'CONOR.

Miscellany

THE FRENCH EXHIBITION—I.

IN Burlington House there are collected specimens of works of art made in France during more than ten centuries. It is a collection of almost bewildering richness and magnificence and affords striking evidence of how continuous the urge towards plastic expression has been in the peoples of France. All that I can hope to do in the following essays is to pick out here and there some of those works which seem to me, for one reason or another, specially significant.

The treasure brought from the almost inaccessible hill-town of Conques gives us a fascinating glimpse of those periods which precede what we may call our conscious history. In these the erudite beauty of the result is strangely contrasted with the rough crudity of the technique. The marvellous reliquary given by Pépin d'Aquitaine (817–838) to the Abbey of Conques (44A) is nothing but a small wooden box covered with plates of *repoussé* gold, decorated with filigree and gems and with figures in high relief also hammered out of the thin metal. But what astonishing taste is shown in the proportions of the patterns, in the placing of the gems! The figures, so far from being stiff and linear as we might expect from such early art, have a breadth of treatment and unity of rhythm which we associate with the culminating periods of art. Nothing is more surprising than this baroque freedom and sweep of rhythm of the Carolingian Renaissance. One can see it again in the figure of an evangelist in a Psalter of St. Aure (45A). This is nearer to El Greco than it is to the precise linear drawing of the twelfth century or the tight elegance and superficiality of most thirteenth-century illumination. The same contrast can be seen, in case 572 in the Central Hall, between the exquisitely proportioned Chalice of St. Gauzelin of the tenth century with its "precious" ornament and the relatively vulgar luxury of the Chalice of St. Remi of the end of the twelfth century. No one can deny that the twelfth century was one of the greatest eras of creative energy, that in sculpture it achieved the greatest masterpieces—the superb columnar statues of Solomon and the Queen of Sheba stand in the Central Hall to witness it—but we can see from this that by the end of that century craftsmanship was already beginning its insidious attacks on artistry.

In Gallery I the great sensation apart from that early reliquary is the pair of figures from the series of tapestries of the Apocalypse from Angers. Each figure is seated in an immensely lofty arched canopy or niche from the crochetted tops of which angels wave flags. There is something strangely moving in the effect of these unusual proportions and in the subdued splendour of the colour with its dull violets, faded reds and toned whites. The Northern artists of the fourteenth century rarely attained to monumental grandeur or simplicity, such as marks the Italian work of the period—the spirit of the time was all for *mignardise* and elegance—but in these tapestries one artist, Hennequin de Bruges, can be put beside the great Florentines. I know no other Northern Mediæval painting—for this tapestry can be fairly compared to fresco painting—which rises to this imaginative height. There is nothing here by one of the chief French artists of the fourteenth century, Mélchior Broederlam, since the exquisite little diptych (17) is by a pure miniaturist, a man without any of the distinctively pictorial imagination which Broederlam shows. One other object in this room, the fifteenth-century Burgundian sculpture of the *Virgin and Child* (19), has exceptional beauty. This illustrates a peculiarly French quality, namely, the alert receptiveness of the French to the significance of movement as seen in some apparently trifling incident of every-day life. This is a piece of pure genre. The artist has watched a young, almost girlish, mother sitting with her child in her arms; the child struggles and almost wriggles out of her hold to one side, whilst she, either attracted by something or merely in a vague reverie, turns her head the other way. It is just such a movement as Chardin might have painted, or Renoir, or, to go outside Burlington House, it is just the theme that might have inspired Bonnard. But there it is, a moment's fascinated wondering vision, seized and recorded in stone. It goes right outside the traditional types of composition; it comes straight from life, and the artist has been quick to seize on the rare plastic possibilities of this double opposed movement and has carried the rhythm through into the broad sweep of the drapery.

Fifteenth-century France, though it had not the immense productivity of contemporary Flanders and Italy, had its distinct and clearly marked personalities; only they are strangely disconnected. Here in Gallery II we have Fouquet and the Maître de Moulins, both clear personalities, but without any points of contact. Then there is the great Master of the Aix Annunciation, again utterly distinct, and the very strange, and as yet unplaced, master of the Weld-Blundell *Madonna* (50A). Of all these Fouquet is much the most distinctively French. One can suppose him emerging by mere force of personality from the general tradition of the minor arts and of illumination. And, in fact, he is much more a draughtsman who paints than specifically a painter. Though he may have been influenced in detail by foreign arts, his whole manner of vision is distinct alike from Flemish and Italian. His *Madonna and Child*, from Antwerp (70), is indeed intensely French in its peculiar feeling for what is vivid, *pimpant* and alert in feminine grace. It has none of the grave beauty of the Italian, none of the strained pathos of the Flemish Virgins. Its inspiration is derived from the special social awareness of the French. And Fouquet's admirable portraits show the same keen imaginative worldliness. Of all these perhaps the most revealing is his own tiny self-portrait in enamel (580M), which is worth hunting out in the cases of the Central Hall. It is a piece of great draughtsmanship. To Fouquet's school belongs a very striking *Deposition* (46) which has only recently come to light in a church in Touraine. It is a moving and dramatic composition, though it is not by a great master.

Though the Maître de Moulins has not the intensity and originality of Fouquet, he is much more of a painter. Indeed, outside Italy, he must be counted as one of the best painters of the fifteenth century, since none of the Flemish masters have his plastic feeling. Though he has been confused with Hugo van der Goes, there is little excuse for this, for he has a very distinctive manner and a far stronger feeling for the atmospheric envelopment of his figures, for realising them in the round and situating them in space. His *St. Victor and Donor* (68) is in this respect a masterly painting, and in the great Moulins Triptych he shows himself able to carry through a complicated design with an unfailing sentiment for unity of tone and colour. A certain blandness and suavity in his nature, and the even.

unaccented quality of his work, tend to conceal from us his extraordinary mastery and his control of organic design.

As for the Master of the Annunciation of Aix, it looks as though a recent documentary discovery would at last clear up the mystery, though the answer is itself sufficiently mysterious. It appears that he was in fact a Neapolitan painter called Colantonio. It is probable, however, that he worked in Provence and painted this for the Church of the Magdalen at Aix. When and where he learned the art of the Van Eycks we do not know, but their influence is fully apparent here not only in the technique, but in the design and conception. I cannot help thinking that a great lost work by Hubert Van Eyck lies behind this splendid composition, so intensely is it in his spirit. The reunion of the separate parts of this altarpiece is one of the triumphs of the present exhibition. Colantonio was probably the master, or one of the masters, of Antonello da Messina, and here perhaps may lie the clue to a whole series of fascinating works which have never been properly situated, but which have always seemed to have connections with Provence. We may some day unravel the mystery of the widespread influence of the Van Eycks on the art of the South.

In Gallery III we leave the Middle Ages and come to the Italianising art of the Renaissance, here reduced to a strict minimum, a fact of which no one is likely to complain, for it was the least creative period in the whole history of French art and we may pass it by. The recently canonised artist family of the Lenain Brothers is in full force in Gallery III. Ever since the war they have occupied a large place in French criticism. No doubt it was a piquant curiosity to find in the art of the seventeenth century, so dominated as it is by a few great academic spirits, this group of naive realists. Louis Lenain was glorified as the Millet of the seventeenth century. Both certainly painted peasants, but their likeness ends there, for Millet tried to Michelangelise his "tillers of the soil," whilst Lenain gave them more than their share of owlish vacancy and stupidity. When Louis tries his hand at imaginative work, as in his *Repentant Magdalene* (121), he is as vulgarly melodramatic as can well be. He is safer in his peasant scenes where he keeps a pleasant grey tonality. But not only do his figures lack all movement and expression and pose like yokels before a camera, but he has not a notion of relating one figure with another. I notice that some critics, in response to French critical propaganda, have compared Lenain with the Dutch masters, distinguished from them only by their greater delicacy and finesse. Nothing could be less true, for he has far less subtlety, less perception, as well as far less æsthetic feeling than the minor Dutchmen. Were the Lenains really of the Dutch school they would come so far below the Potts, Leduqs and Sweerts's, that we should never bother our heads with them. It is probable that they will go back before very long to their place among the journeymen artists.

ROGER FRY.

THOUGHTS ON THE CIRCUS

EACH year we look forward to the Olympia Circus, to make us feel vagabond and light-hearted and drag us through the English winter. Will Mr. Bertram Mills be as wonderful as ever in discovering new wizards for our delight? And successful he always is. This year perhaps he has been a shade less triumphant than usual. I suspect that the new Aliens Restrictions, which are going to do so much harm to trade, have lain heavy on his spirit.

There is a shortage of first-class novelties. The Wallenda Brothers go once more through their marvellous turn. They are the most terrifying of acrobats. But we have seen them before. Among new arrivals there is a good deal to be said for the Allison Troupe, still more for the Walkmirs, still more perhaps for the Arthur Klein Cyclists. But there are no contortionists, no jugglers, no sea-lions, no elephants, and rather more dancing horses than I quite appreciate. I must make an exception for the mules and zebras, however, charming animals, delightfully caparisoned, whose appearance was more important than their tricks. I felt I could have watched them for ever.

One has a slight twinge of conscience nowadays at a circus. The circus is one of the oldest of the traditional joys of civilised society. It appeals, as does nothing else, to that nomadic instinct that still lies so close to our skins. But the humanitarians are beginning to spoil our pleasure for us. Performing animals are an essential feature of a circus; and we can none of us be happy if we think that the animals are in misery.

Do people who denounce the cruelty of animal performances properly distinguish between one kind of animal turn and another? Nothing will induce me to believe that sea-lions and dogs do not thoroughly enjoy acting. The sea-lion takes its bow with all the self-satisfaction of the genuine artist, while a dog "off" observes the performance of its companions with a disgust which would do credit to the most jealous prima donna. On this occasion Little Fred's Football Dogs play Rugger with a frenzy of delight. They wear no muzzles and are led off after the match by the boy scouts; so they cannot be savage. It might be argued, I suppose, that the process of learning to play Rugger is painful to bull-dogs. So it is to many human beings, but it is generally reckoned worth the trouble.

Again, if I owned three chimpanzee trick cyclists, like Max, Moritz and Akka, I should take very good care of their health. Certainly their turn may be a strain on their intellect. But they seem like three naughty children, enjoying themselves thoroughly; and one of them is a marvel. Two of them wear muzzles. They are presumably older than the third, and chimpanzees, like human beings, grow cross and stupid with age.

I should not mind if I never saw tigers perform again, though a tiger in motion is perhaps the most beautiful of God's works, and Mathies' troop is wonderful. But must it not be a strain on the nerves of a tiger to jump through a hoop of fire? There is a sinister look about the whole exhibition, though at the Zoo, they say, they do not have much trouble with cats, which are easier than bears, and that what difficulties there are are due to jealousy for the keeper. Mathies' tigers are in beautiful condition, with perfect skins. Still I am uncomfortable about tigers, and I should like to know how they are trained.

I notice that the humanitarian ground is slightly changing. It is now less the teaching of tricks that excites animadversion than the lives the animals lead "out of school," the life on the road. Here again more discrimination is necessary. An elephant walks from one fair to another at a steady pace of some two and a half miles an hour. You cannot hurry him, and if anyone is exasperated it is, I should think, the keeper. What animal has ever looked happier than an elephant trekking from one fair to another? Personally I should not like to put through their tricks a pack of tigers whose nerves had just been rasped beyond endurance in a Louis XI cage. Drugging would either be inadequate or so complete as to stop the performance. Sea-lions too have serviceable bodies, which will fit into almost any shape. But my observation of circuses makes me desire that bears should be eliminated. For bears are morose and hard to tame and often seem badly housed and tended. Till I am more sure about the evidence, I am not willing to join in a general movement against a form of entertainment which gives great pleasure to man, and, in many cases, I believe, to beast as well. I want details.

The Puritans, arguing as sound philosophers, objected to bear baiting not because it caused pain to the bears, but because it afforded pleasure to the spectators. The humanitarians, who have unwisely abandoned this original and really impregnable position, have now got to do something much harder—enter into the psychology of a beast.

FRANCIS BIRRELL.

PLAYS AND PICTURES

Victorian Sentiment as a Christmas Treat

THERE are more ways than one of reviving a Victorian play, and the way in which Mr. Anmer Hall is doing the forty-years-old *Pair of Spectacles* for a series of Christmas matinées at the Westminster Theatre is obviously one of the good ones. There is no caricature, no scoffing, and no commenting. Mr. Tyrone Guthrie has gone all out for a straight production, and the audience can sniff or weep, enter in or stay detached, just as it pleases. The play is untainted by anything later than the late nineteenth century. Mr. Henry Ainley, made up apparently as Charles Dickens in his prime, revels in the Sheffield accent and the Sheffield sentiments of his part, and if Mr. Anmer Hall allows himself to be dominated a shade too much by his Yorkshire brother it does not spoil the effect of a generously hefty contrast. Miss Molly McArthur's setting and costumes are so appropriate that they might pass unnoticed; but they give the period exactly. This is a touchingly reverent production, enjoyed by the actors as well as the audience, and if there are post-Victorians whom it will leave cold they will have none but themselves to blame.

Clio Unbends

1066 *And All That* is nothing more than an Arts Theatre holiday-lark; but I am by no means sure that this absurdly funny show is not an immortal pantomime in the making. It would have to be taken in hand. As it stands it contains more bad jokes than any other play in London. But it also contains more good ones, and my fury at being told, on no better grounds than that it was ten past eleven, that history ends with the death of Queen Elizabeth, suggests at once the need of another act, with cutting to make room for it. The framework of the piece, to be credited to Mr. Michael Watts, is particularly amusing. One snarl from Mr. Walter Hudd, the schoolmaster, and the velvet padded seats of our stalls become the hard pitch-pine of memory. Guiltily we remember the clichés which adorned those exam. papers to which he alludes so scarifyingly. Incidentally he gives an outrageously magnificent performance, the weary rasp, the shambling gait, above all the shabby sports-coat tragically half-concealed beneath the chalky gown. Some twenty-one other players amuse themselves and us with seventy-nine speaking parts. I must select Mr. Francis Sullivan (especially as the generic Baron), Mr. Alfred Harris, in a familiar make-up as Thomas à Belloc, Mr. Wilfred Grantham as John, and Miss Jean Cadell, completely right as Elizabeth.

Gracie Fields in Revue

Walk This Way at the Winter Garden is a good show, but it might have been better, I think, if Mr. Morris Harvey's distinctive talent had been given more scope. Gracie Fields works hard and she is on the stage most of the time, and yet there is not perhaps enough of her at her best. She is there, but only in flashes. Mr. Archie Pitt's sketches, often brilliant in themselves, seem all to have been half-written for Gracie Fields, and, while she can hold the stage magnificently by herself, it is difficult for anyone to hold it with her. Why not some sketches where she reigns supreme and others where she doesn't reign at all? And why such a lack of taste in design and colour of costumes and settings (not everywhere, but enough to ruin some of the scenes) when so many good lessons have been so hardly learned? Still, it is a jolly show, and there is a lot of originality and ingenuity to counterbalance the slick imitations; and anyhow I would sit twiddling my thumbs a long time to be rewarded by Gracie Fields singing "Grannie's Little Old Skin Rug," or proving to us what we had long suspected about a coloratura soprano.

"Palmy Days"

Palmy Days, with Eddie Cantor, at the Dominion, is as good a film as anyone could wish to see. The plot is nothing in itself, being designed to show off the various tricks of which the screen is capable, dancing, swimming, sham crooks, cop motor races, and the various agitations of machinery. The film puts through their paces a fine collection of very pretty girls, and Eddie Cantor himself never flags in variety and humour. The dialogue reaches a high level all through and the wit is of the inconsequent *surréaliste* order, which recalls the art of the Marx Brothers, though the film itself is more cinematographic than the music-hall art of the Marx Brothers. Several sequences towards the end in the vast bakery which forms the main set of *Palmy Days* show that the director has studied with good effect the art of Réné Clair. *Palmy Days* is a film well worth visiting more than once.

The Best War Film

Pabst's *West Frônt* 1918, which will be shown at the Academy Cinema next week, is easily the best, if not the most striking, of war films. The acting and photography, as in all Pabst's films (we do not see enough of them here), is quiet and remarkably good. By means of a succession of incidents in the lives of four young Germans at the front, small bits of the line, men struggling in a fallen dug-out, a concert behind the lines, and interludes of leave among the bread-queues in Berlin, the battle scene is given far more effectively than it was in the over dramatised *All Quiet*. The hopelessness and monotony of the last year of the war are impressed without exaggeration; small incidents accumulate, one man after another disappears, and at the end one is left with an appalling feeling of a tragedy which is impersonal as well as being real. In the version shown recently by the Film Society, the film was long and there was an interminable tin-shed concert which might be shortened. Otherwise the film goes so smoothly that one hardly notices the subtle transitions from one to another of the four chief characters, and the sound-cutting throughout is extremely good.

Things to see and hear in the coming week:

Saturday, January 9th—
- Robert Mayer Concert for Children, Central Hall, Westminster, 11.
- Donald Francis Tovey, Beethoven Recital, Wigmore Hall, 3.
- Exhibition of 20th Century French Art begins, Leicester Galleries.
- Farewell Benefit Performance by Moscow Art Theatre Players, supported by Mme. Karsavina and Lydia Lipkovska. Short Plays by Tchekov and Dostoevsky, Kingsway Theatre, 8.15.

Sunday, January 10th—
- J. A. Hobson on "The Recording Angel," Conway Hall, 11.
- "Below the Surface," by J. L. S. Hunt and H. G. Stoker, Phœnix Theatre.

Monday, January 11th—
- Course of Lectures on French Art, by Miss Mary Chamot, begins, Kingsway Hall, 6.
- London Symphony Orchestra, Queen's Hall, 8.15.

Wednesday, January 13th—
- B.B.C. Symphony Orchestra, Queen's Hall, 8.15.

Thursday, January 14th—
- Lecture on French Art, Bedford College, 5.15.

Friday, January 15th—
- E. F. Wise on "Politics and International Finance," Caxton Hall, 8.

Current Literature

BOOKS IN GENERAL

FEW modern critics of English literature excel Mr. Middleton Murry in the patient work of detailed analysis. There is far too little of this kind of criticism, which has an unending fascination to all who care to investigate the origin, to explore into the bypaths, of an author's work. In the second series of *Countries of the Mind* (Oxford University Press, 7s. 6d.) there are several essays which will delight all genuine students of letters. The best are certainly the three connected with Shakespeare —*North's Plutarch*, *Shakespeare's Dedication* and *Problems of Shakespeare's Sonnets*. After these three can be commended the essays on Flatman, Lady Winchilsea, and Crabb Robinson, and the Wordsworths. That on Lessing is comparatively dull, and that on Bossuet, enthusiastic as it is, has the fatal flaw which is to be found in all Mr. Murry's writing on theology—his apparent inability to acquaint himself with what is and what is not orthodox Christianity. Mr. Murry's similar mental awkwardness in approaching metaphysic spoils the essay on Godwin and the ambitious essay on *The Metaphysic of Poetry*. In the essay on Godwin it is difficult not to accuse him of a certain frivolity. He is endeavouring to defend Godwin against those who cannot agree with that arid conventionalist's treatment of Shelley. He entirely mistakes the point of view of these critics.

* * *

> There are moments in our reading of the preposterous story of Godwin's financial entanglements . . . when it comes upon us with a sudden flash that Godwin was just as other-worldly as Shelley himself. He seems to be living in a region of thought where he has a perfect and obvious right to the money of his friends.

Whether one agrees or not with this rather over simple view of Godwin, it does not affect the problem of his relations with Shelley. A man has, perhaps, a right to his friend's money; not even a philosopher has the right to take money from a man whom he abuses as Godwin did Shelley, after the poet had eloped with Mary. Godwin could choose. He could scold Shelley as a rascal and a seducer; or he could agree with the poet's application of the philosopher's principles, and borrow Shelley's money. He must not do both.

> He sponged on Shelley; and there is an end of him. That Shelley sponged on him is not so much forgotten as not understood, for that would demand that Shelley's poetry should be read with application. At a moderate estimate three-quarters of it is Godwin in poetry. He gave Shelley his ideas, and expected Shelley to give him his money. Was it really so monstrous? Or does it seem monstrous merely to those for whom money is real and ideas next door to nonentities? Perhaps, after all, Godwin's chief crime is that he actually believed he had given value for money.

It is a pity that Mr. Murry does not tell us what original ideas Godwin had; or what of that pinchbeck Rousseauite's "ideas" can be found in *Prometheus Unbound*, *The Cenci*, *Epipsychidion*, or those lyrics and odes by which we chiefly remember Shelley. Shelley was a disciple of Godwin's; but that he owed anything to him except the power to persist in a painfully unhumorous pedantry would need a volume to prove.

* * *

Anyone who practises criticism regularly and in the newspapers is aware with what ease a writer can lapse into generalisation and a rather pretentious manner of pontificating; also how hard it is to remember one's general critical philosophy, and continuously apply it. Mr. Murry is admirable when he is examining some detailed problem, especially when he investigates an author's vocabulary, not only stylistically, but in order to illustrate some idiosyncrasy, or some event in his life. It is in his generalisations that he is weak; and he is unfortunately showing an increasing tendency to indulge in that dangerous amusement. The virtue of the habit is, of course, that it arouses a healthy inquisitiveness in the reader, who is pulled up by such a statement as "we have no real philosophic poetry in English," or, in the same essay, on *The Metaphysic of Poetry*, "Shakespeare created a new order of values, independent of the great medieval Christian tradition, yet spiritual through and through: a system of values, so far as we can see, completely divorced from any faith in immortality or after justice . . ." The statement about Shakespeare can only provoke the retort that Mr. Murry cannot, apparently, see so far as the great sonnet on death, with its triumphant line: "And death once dead, there's no more dying then," or even so far as Hamlet's refusal to kill Claudio when the king is possibly in a state of grace. The statement, in fact, is nonsense. The generalisation about philosophic poetry is in a different class. It is evident that we have no philosophic poet of the same stature as Lucretius, no philosophic poem of the same calibre as the *De Rerum Natura*. Nor has any European literature. Unless, however, Mr. Murry is putting an unfair emphasis on "real," I do not see how this epithet philosophic can be denied to much of the poetry of Milton, Pope, Browning, Blake, Patmore, Francis Thompson, and Thomas Hardy, even if we exclude, as Mr. Murry wishes, Wordsworth and Shelley as poets, of whom he declares, "Of the process of intellectual argument they contain nothing," an opinion that would be difficult to sustain in an analysis of *Epipsychidion* or *Tintern Abbey*, unless one read in front of "intellectual argument" the words "sound and convincing"—a process that would dispose, for some people, of the claims both of Lucretius and Dante. It is a pity that Mr. Murry reprinted his essay as it appeared in February, 1928; for since then he has had the opportunity of reading and considering *The Testament of Beauty*, without which his essay seems oddly lopsided to a modern reader.

* * *

No doubt many of Mr. Murry's admirers, who perhaps at times draw themselves a reverent sigh at his excessive solemnity, will be shocked at the charge; but, as I say, I find him at times guilty of an essential frivolity. I will quote two instances of it, one comparatively trivial. In the delightful essay on Crabb Robinson, a perfect piece of approach presentation, he suddenly spoils his narrative thus: "Wordsworth frequently appears like an amiable, shaggy, comical, stupid dog. That is, of course, merely the generic misfortune of being a man." Can anything be falser? Is not Wordsworth's emotional clumsiness, which Mr. Murry is contrasting with Mrs. Wordsworth's "instructive feminine sense of reality," obviously his own peculiar misfortune? Could Mr. Murry take the words he applies to Wordsworth and use them of Shakespeare, St. Francis, Blake, Keats, Lamb, Thackeray or Whistler—to mention a few very different men? And if he cannot is not his generalisation obviously frivolous? The serious instance of this frivolity occurs at the beginning of the first essay. "Metaphor is as ultimate as speech itself, and speech as ultimate as thought." Here, at the opening of a discussion, in some ways delicate and subtle, on the nature of metaphor, Mr. Murry starts with a wild generalisation which evidently should only come at the end of a long and close process of reasoning. I feel severely about this, because I am always tempted to say that speech is as ultimate as thought. I think it could probably be proved that speech, in time, is at least co-terminous with thought; I am quite sure that it is not so fundamental. I cannot myself divorce thought from words; but I know those who can, and I know that they are mentally superior to me, have a finer imaginative grasp on that world of realities which it is the object of thought to penetrate, and of language to express. It is that world which Mr. Murry craves after with a sense of exile that he often expresses movingly; but he rarely convinces his readers that he has obtained what he desires.

RICHARD SUNNE.

AN ANGEL OF PEACE

The Unseen Assassins. By SIR NORMAN ANGELL. Hamilton. 7s. 6d.

Sir Norman Angell is a very curious writer and thinker. In some ways he reminds one of the fabulous Columbus of the egg story. Politically or socially he sees something which is as plain as a pikestaff, something which everyone ought to have known but which no one knew, something so simple that, when it is pointed out to us, we feel slightly uncomfortable. Again, his own mind is so clear and reasonable and is so apt to simplify the simple that he rarely makes a statement which even the most prejudiced or obtuse could question. It seems, therefore, a paradox that the thesis of his most famous work *The Great Illusion* was almost universally misunderstood. But it was not really a paradox. As stated by Sir Norman, the thesis that, in the modern world, the objects with which peoples fought and would fight wars are illusory seemed so obvious that nine out of ten people decided that he could not have written a book to say that, and they jumped to the conclusion that what he must have said was that war is impossible.

The Great Illusion is a remarkable work. It is the book of a man who can see in the country of the blind, of a sane man in a world of lunatics. Since it was written the blind and the lunatics have fought another war, the very finest war that blindness and lunacy has ever contrived since the first patriot cracked the skull of an "enemy" with a stone axe. It was everything that a war ought to be. It involved nearly the whole civilised world; it was the apotheosis of patriotism and heroism; it was fought to a finish; "the sword was not sheathed" until the defeated were powerless and the victors imposed the conditions of peace upon them; we were on the winning side and therefore the cause of righteousness triumphed! And the result? Look around! The monuments of the war are everywhere—the war memorials, the unemployed, the unpaid reparations and debts, the world's trade in ruins, the large armies and the great navies, absurd frontiers, embittered minorities, dictatorships, and civil wars. There can scarcely be a man in any of the Allied countries who can remember August, 1914, and who to-day does not know that every important object for which we entered the war and for which we fought it to the end has proved to be a mockery and illusion. To say this is merely to say that the Great War justified every word of *The Great Illusion*.

Is the world impressed? Has it learnt its lesson? Does it say: "In this book we have not only an angel of peace, but a prophet"? Not a bit of it. Except for a few people in the various countries and in a little corner by the Lake of Geneva, the world acts as though *The Great Illusion* had never been written and the Great War had never been fought. The patriots and the Generals and the Admirals are still all saying everywhere that the only guarantee of national security is that everyone should be stronger than everyone else. The Lord Beaverbrooks and Rothermeres, the Hitlers and Mussolinis, the Poincarés and the Hearsts are all urging us to build the new world of sovereign, independent, national States exactly on the model of the old world, which produced the war—and it is to these men, not to Norman Angell, that the peoples listen. Frenchmen are still insisting that Germany must pay them millions while they shut out German goods by which alone Germany can pay, and Americans insist that the Allies shall repay them vast loans while they shut out the Allies' goods by which alone they can pay. Our National Government meanwhile joins the rest of a lunatic nationalist world in trying to remedy the shrinking of international trade by increasing the obstacles to its revival.

Meditating upon the fate of his former book and upon the desperate fact that the world remains politically blind and socially lunatic, Sir Norman Angell (how one regrets the Mr.!) has tried to discover the psychological causes of this inveterate blindness and lunacy. He argues that ordinary men do not desire war and economic evils and social injustice, and yet that they create them or cause them by failing to apply to political and social problems knowledge which practically all of them possess. They pursue "policies," such as those of nationalism, protectionism, and the independent, sovereign State, which inevitably imply war, anarchy, and economic evil, but they fail to see the implications of the policies. These unseen implications are the "unseen assassins" of his title. He believes that the failure of the modern world to see these implications is mainly due to a lack of education and his book is a first step towards the political and social education of the ordinary man. It is a good beginning for it is nearly, if not quite, as remarkable a book as *The Great Illusion*. It has the same simplicity and cogency. Reading it, one feels that it must convince even a Lord Beaverbrook or a Mussolini. One hopes that it will and yet one has an uneasy feeling that it won't, that these great men will only decide, with many of the lesser fry, that Sir Norman Angell has written another book to prove that war was, is, and will be impossible. Meanwhile they and we can get on with the real job of making the next war inevitable.

LEONARD WOOLF.

DR. DORSEY SPEAKS A MOUTHFUL

Civilisation. By GEORGE A. DORSEY. Hamilton. 15s.

"We have developed a great civilisation," boomed a voice over the American radio, and Dr. Dorsey, whose business it was as a working anthropologist to cast an equal eye over apes, Polynesian Islanders, Bushmen and Aztecs, Bethlehem and Babylon, Athens and Rome, as well as over New York and San Francisco, waited impatiently for an explanation. The radio announcement was complacent but bald, and the listener, in no mood for complacency as he watched the goings-on in New York City, determined to lift up his voice towards his fellow citizens in a great work of explanation. When a hundred per cent. American, bred in the fundamentalist faith, goes over to a scientific materialism while retaining his enthusiasm for humanity, he should be worth a hearing. When in addition he has the learning, the vitality, the homely wit and the rhetorical power of Dr. Dorsey, we may expect fireworks, and in this book we get them. In a sense it is an enormous failure. A book so long, so vast in range, is only bearable if there is an argument as well as innumerable arguments, and a steady illumination which persists when all the verbal fireworks have burnt themselves out. Dr. Dorsey's book is not always bearable, though it is difficult to analyse the stunning effect of a continuous perusal. To read ten pages is to be stimulated by the arts of a practised and provocative debater. There on the platform is Dr. Dorsey, in great fighting trim, making his points, firing off his jokes, with hearty gesticulation and a wary eye on hecklers. Every sentence has a kick to it. Every paragraph is nicely calculated, even if it is nicely calculated nonsense. Successive paragraphs indeed are often inconsequent, but what of that, for Dr. Dorsey will presently sit down and then it will be our turn. But Dr. Dorsey shows no sign of sitting down. As over-stimulation gives place to fidgets, we realise that he is out to beat a record in non-stop oratory, and when at page 957 he does stop we are too weary or too irritated to make any response. Yet I conclude, after suffering this unusual experience, that it is worth while to resist the onset of sleep and irritation and pay attention to Dr. Dorsey. Americans of whatever percentage will quarrel healthily about this book, particularly its concluding section, in which Dr. Dorsey takes a whip to American civilisation. And those others of us who are exercised to understand how man has landed himself in his present mess will do well to weigh Dr. Dorsey's account of the process.

If one may summarise so extended and elusive an argument, the gist of this book is that the whole duty of man, and his one chance of happiness, both as individual and in association, is to face up to and master the tangible world. This-worldliness, not otherworldliness, is what matters. The early chapters, in which Dr. Dorsey holds the ape-mirror up to man and shows how he grew out of just fooling around into fooling around with a purpose, until he really began to make things work, and to find joy in the making, are the clearest and most convincing in the book. But unfortunately it takes a brave man to accept without defences what his intelligence shows him of life. With intelligence grows fear—of disease, of natural catastrophe, above all of death. And so man lulled his fear of disaster and extinction by inventing his other worlds—the worlds of spirits and totems, of magic and propitiation, of mysticism and of God. The antagonism between science and religion is absolute, for the one aims at making a workable order from discoverable fact, and the other at ignoring the relative truth which science achieves in favour of an unverifiable absolute. All religions are rooted in fear, the successful ones establish a strangle hold of priestly tyranny and are the refuge of the misfit, the frustrate, the psychologically perverted. What was invented as an adjunct to man's healthy activities swells until it petrifies them. The Christian religion is a case in point. Its rise from the myths of the early civilisation of the Near East was fortuitious. A lucky combination of circumstances enabled it

to capture Rome, and for fifteen hundred years it arrested rational thought in Europe, degraded sex through a spurious asceticism, and sanctioned and perpetuated untold misery. Since then mechanical science has unified the world and rushed ahead with us. We flounder on, impelled by our mechanical power, impeded by the dogmas of supernatural religion, and locked in an economic system which is breaking down. And so to America of 1930, where Jehovah, Success and the Machine contend for the mastery, and the greatest of these is Success. This is not a pretty picture, but the colours which Dr. Dorsey lays on are less repellent than those commonly used by men of his persuasion. Of Greece, for instance, he says:

> Greece has no history. It was never an Empire, a kingdom, a nation, or even a union of States. A great patriot, statesman, warrior, appears in this place or that; something happens; it looks promising: the promise is never fulfilled. A brilliant light blazes up, now here, now there; it seems as though it might light up the world: then darkness reigns again. A clarion voice rings out, loud, strong, pure; but it is not heard five miles away and is promptly forgotten. A superlative democracy arises: it was founded on slavery. Rational thought is born again and again: to be thrown away with the bath water, or drugged with hemlock.

Of religion:

> Man's business is to live on this earth and with his fellow-men. No other business can transcend that or yield richer returns. Anything that comes between man and earth or sets man against his fellow-men is an enemy of the human race, an impediment in man's speed, a hindrance to his footsteps. Faith in anything beyond the sensible, devotion to anything beyond the reasonable, is such an enemy. All that civilised man has done that would shame a polecat, degrade a hyena, and make a cur hang his head, has been done in some god's name and on behalf of some absurd, insane or monstrous faith. It was not necessary to know the world; it was only necessary to be prepared to abandon it on a minute's notice. The world was not made tidier or sweeter, because "What's the use, if it is so soon to be abandoned?" Nor did human conduct become more human, because "Why be human, when one can be a saint or a devil?"

Well, as the author himself might say, there you have the best and worst of Dorsey: he may not be nice, but he certainly talks.

BARRINGTON GATES.

AMUSING, BUT—

The Facts of Fiction. By NORMAN COLLINS. Gollancz. 10s. 6d.

"Fanny Burney is the first recorded specimen of a now familiar English bird often shot on these shores, the woman novelist, who could write a really admirable novel, and yet remain a foolish young thing all her life." "What a colossal blunder—in a modern novelist's eyes—the creation of Man Friday really was. It would have needed the arrival of Woman Wednesday in place of Man Friday to make a modern novel of that nursery romance." ". . . the great men of the present, the Walpoles, the Priestleys and the Mottrams. . . ." It will be seen that Mr. Collins does not take himself or his readers too seriously. He has matched the vivid yellow of the Gollancz cover, and by comparison the orange band of the Book Society's recommendation seems almost too academic a distinction. The *facts* of fiction! Mr. Collins' book is rather longer than Raleigh's *The English Novel*, and contains perhaps one-hundredth the information. It is a book for confirmed novel-readers and for those who have noticed in the corner of a circulating library books (novels even!) written in other centuries and would like to know something about them before addressing themselves to their lists. Besides, *The Facts of Fiction* is far more jaunty and readable than most novels and covers more ground. It contradicts. Richardson and Scott are boomed, Fielding's indecent dish is nibbled and put away with the hope that readers will be robust enough to stomach it, Jane Austen is slanged (how it will prick the Janeites!), the case against D. H. Lawrence, against James Joyce, even against George Moore, is argued with quotations. Mr. Collins romps irrepressibly and with obvious enjoyment, taking in the side-shows as well as the roundabouts. "Booby critics have always loved taking a shy at Sir Walter Scott." "[Jane Austen's] prose is among the most unmusical in the language." "Mr. George Moore's mind . . . simply drifts about in the slums on flat feet like a charity worker." "The observant, and sometimes peeping, naturalism that Balzac practised." But there remain "the great men of the present, the Walpoles, the Priestleys and the Mottrams." Poor flat-footed George Moore, poor peeping Balzac!

Perhaps Mr. Collins should have left literature out of it altogether. The standards of "fiction" and "literature," as of "drama" and "the stage," are not always the same. To mix them, as he does, without a proper regard for either, appealing first to one and then to the other, whichever helps him most at the moment, is a mistake that leads to ineffectiveness. For his criticism, though lively and knowing and often pointed, is not usually effective. Histories of the novel have been written in plenty, but there is room for a good book on fiction. What a pity that Mr. Collins has just missed writing it!

AFRICA BEFORE THE NEGRO

The Stone Age Cultures of Kenya Colony. By L. S. B. LEAKEY, with Appendices by J. D. SOLOMON, C. E. P. BROOKS, A. T. HOPWOOD, H. C. BECK, and M. CONNOLLY. Cambridge University Press. 25s.

Apart from the most recent attempts to systematise prehistoric exploration in South Africa, our knowledge of the early inhabitants of the continent is due almost entirely to isolated lucky finds. Mr. Leakey's systematic investigation in Kenya of an area with which he familiarised himself as a school-boy raises the hope that it may not be long before we see African prehistory in the same perspective as the last thirty years have taught us to see that of Europe.

In his restrained and somewhat severely written volume Mr. Leakey gives us an account of part of the results of two seasons' work in Kenya, results which from an archæological point of view are by far the most important that have yet come out of Black Africa. Actually he describes and discusses only a portion of his finds, viz.: the stone implements and associated pottery fragments, reserving the human remains as well as detailed description of the sites for future publications. To the laity stones and bones are proverbially dry, and the stones may well seem drier than they need be when kept apart from the men who used them. It is, then, a pity that Mr. Leakey has not included with his stones a fuller description and discussion of their makers, but even as it stands the volume records such outstanding discoveries that we must be devoutly grateful to the author in whatever form he presents his results, as well as to the University that first provided the means.

Although all Mr. Leakey's discoveries are African, it is only against the European background—the one background that we know at all adequately—that their significance can be appreciated. Prehistorians have long divided the Palæolithic, or Old Stone Age, into Lower, Middle, and Upper. In Europe the Lower Palæolithic or River Drift period is well known by its characteristic stone implements (ovates, or *coups de poing*), but we have only two fragmentary remains of man, the Heidelberg jaw and the Piltdown skull. The Middle Palæolithic (Mousterian) has equally typical implements, and so many skeletons have been discovered that there is not much more for us to learn concerning the skeletal anatomy of adult man of this period. The Upper Palæolithic (Aurignacian to Magdalenian), in which our own species, *Homo sapiens*, first appears, is likewise characterised by the form of its stone implements, so that we reach the conception of successive (or occasionally overlapping) lithic forms, each characteristic of a particular portion of the Old Stone Age and associated with a particular type of man having his own culture. There is little to indicate that the implements characterising each period developed from those of its predecessor; indeed, except in rare instances, it is obvious that they arose independently of each other, yet never in Europe is there any variation in the stratification—one succeeds the other as though they were type fossils in a geological section (as indeed in a sense they are). Now the importance of Mr. Leakey's discoveries is that he has found in the Kenya highlands a succession of stone tools ranging from River Drift to Aurignacian in type and passing from the Palæolithic into that transitional period which we call Mesolithic or Epipalæolithic, and thence to Neolithic, so that we can now say that in East Africa there was roughly the same succession of culture types as in Western Europe.

With regard to the human remains, even the earliest belong to our own species, but they are not the remains of negroes. Hence wherever the negro arose—and this is one of the puzzles of Anthropology—the early men discovered by Mr. Leakey were not of the black race, but were probably Hamites, the stock to which such peoples as the predynastic Egyptians and present-day Somali belong. This result is not entirely unexpected, even if these early Kenya men had a tincture of negro blood, since Sergi

postulated the Horn of Africa as the cradle-land of the Hamites, while those who considered an Asiatic origin—probably common with that of the Semites—as more likely were agreed even before Mr. Leakey's discoveries that the Hamites had been entering Africa from the East in a series of waves extending back for many thousands of years. The actual age of these skeletons may not be very great as prehistorians reckon time. The Nakuran skulls (now called Gumban) are provisionally regarded as Neolithic, and certainly as not older than 3000 B.C. (perhaps 2000 years younger), while even the older Elmenteita skeletons are definitely post-Aurignacian.

In Europe, however, not only are particular types of tools and men associated, but the period in which each is found is characterised by its fauna, depending on climate, i.e., on advance and retreat of the ice giving rise to glacial episodes. Thus, although there is no final agreement, we may believe that in Western Europe there was a warm River Drift, followed by a warm Mousterian, becoming ever colder as the snow line descended in the last considerable glacial episode, known as the Wurm glaciation. Arctic conditions never penetrated south, even to North Africa, yet the continent did not escape climatic changes, and it is believed that our ice episodes coincided in the Nile Valley with periods of greatly increased rainfall. Hence Mr. Leakey and his geologist, Mr. Solomon, observing great variations in lake levels and associating with these variations the implements characteristic of each culture from the early Palæolithic onwards, attempt to equate the pluvial periods of East Africa with the glacial advances in Europe, and thus by means of pluvial and interpluvial periods to establish a definite correlation between European and African prehistory. C. G. SELIGMAN.

A SCOTCH GARDENER

Diary of a Scotch Gardener. By THOMAS BLAIKIE. Edited by FRANCIS BIRRELL. Routledge. 10s. 6d.

The *Roi Soleil* once observed in his chilly fashion that between his own Majesty and his sister there extended just as profound a social gulf as between his sister and her head gardener. A definite stage in the history of French gardening, as well as a whole epoch in French manners, is marked off by that authoritative pronouncement. The *Grand Siècle* was the age of the formal garden; and the æsthetic and social change which followed is admirably illustrated by the memoirs of Thomas Blaikie. Here was a botanist, turned landscape-gardener, a man of much intelligence but simple birth, who upon the earliest wavelet of romanticism was carried straight into the intimacy of the French court—an intimacy which he supported, one must add, without the smallest trace of self-consciousness.

His first glimpse of the royal family at breakfast sets the tone of his subsequent impressions:

> Mr. Brown . . . conducted us to the Pailas to see the King, &c., at breakfast who was to go a hunting; this breakfast might pass for a dinner as it seemed not of tea or coffe but of good solid meat; the King was dressed almost like a country farmer, a good rough stout man about 25; the Queen which is a very handsome beautiful woman sat opposite . . . The whole company seemed exceeding free and gay with an open cheerfulness which is not comun to be seen amongst the higher Ranks in England.

That passage, with its free and easy spelling, is characteristic of the adventurous gardener's style. He immediately strikes us—and, no doubt, struck his contemporaries—as in some way a very unusual person, possessed of a certain shrewdness and simplicity which would serve him well wherever he happened to be. His training, we learn, was that of a botanist; but when the "English garden" came into vogue, what more natural than that a horticulturist from the land of Ossian should be employed to catch those ingenious effects of wildness which henceforward were to be the criterion of the picturesque? The field was large, his clientèle extravagant, and, if his patron, the Comte de Lauraguais, seldom paid him, through his agency he had been introduced to Philippe Égalité and afterwards to Marie Antoinette. At all events, it was worth his while to stay in France, and foreign residence presently became a habit. He died in Paris in 1838, having lived through the Revolution and the Restoration and seen the scion of his old employer mount the throne, vacated by the last monarch of the Bourbon line.

His diary, then, with its individual turns and indiscriminate sprinkling of French words, is something more than a mere

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by STEPHEN KING-HALL

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archæological curiosity. It brings back the curious flavour of a period, when a modern garden, as designed by the best exponents, was diversified by grottos, hermitages, "tombs of Mahomet," Chinese bridges, pavilions and little pagodas, against a background of shady boscage and wandering walks. Blaikie's designs for the gardens of Bagatelle have been reproduced as plates in the present volume. His handiwork can also be examined in the Parc Monceau, originally part of the Duc d'Orleans' pleasure grounds. But Blaikie's strength was less in landscape-gardening than in the practical knowledge of plants and shrubs. He was eminently—and that is half his charm—a business-like executive character with a shrewd eye for the great world outside his province and a gift of awakening friendship in those he met. The Queen herself was genuinely fond of him, and her last words to him, which he records without flourish, spoken in 1791—"You had a Visite from my Sister Elizabeth who told me what you said. I know your way of thinking and shall never forget you. I have known you long"—cast a pleasant light on their association and give an added pathos to his account of the catastrophe. Altogether, this is a book which can be recommended to every reader who combines a love of gardening with an interest in the flora of the human jungle. Thomas Blaikie is a delightful new recruit to the regiment of English diarists and letter-writers. Mr. Francis Birrell, who has edited his manuscript, supplies an informative and sympathetic introduction.

PETER QUENNELL.

SLOVAKIA

Slovakia Then and Now. By many Slovakian authors. Arranged by R. W. SETON WATSON. Allen and Unwin. 12s. 6d.

With Europe in a recognised state of turmoil there are many in England and elsewhere prepared to blame post-war treaties and the nationalist policy of France for whatever may seem to them vicious in the present European situation. There is a hue and cry of sentiment supporting the revision of treaties and reparation settlements. Democratic opinion is now ready to be excited; it may at any moment find itself possessing the power to compel its statesmen to act without the knowledge necessary to ensure wise action. The problem of Slovakia is one of those age-old Central European questions at any time liable to light the fuse to a great explosion.

Slovakia is an agricultural and pastoral land stretching from the banks of the Danube to the Carpathian mountains, its southernmost point being visible to the traveller from the carriage window after the train has left Vienna and when he is mid-way between Paris and Bucarest. The people of Slovakia are not attractive; they are slow, stubborn, and romantic. Even so enthusiastic a partisan of minority causes as Dr. Seton Watson can only discover two outstanding merits in this ill-organised population: the people can be said to possess a love of music and capacity for working in embroidery and pottery. The importance of Slovakia to the rest of Europe is not due to any qualities possessed by the Slovakians. We are compelled to consider them as a nation because the territory occupied by them borders upon lands liable to be in dispute between Austria, Bohemia and Hungary.

Before the war Slovakia was governed by the Hungarian section of the Dual Monarchy. The Hungarians made no startling contributions towards the rapid emancipation of these unremarkable peasants. Not lacking confidence in themselves and possessing none in the Slovak population, the Hungarian policy was to encourage their own people to take upon themselves all responsible work in the large industrial areas in Bratislava and Kosice. Thus, before the war, nearly all responsible positions in politics, commerce, and church fell automatically into the hands of Hungarians, whose social life and ambitions were centred in Budapest. Under this regime, discontent with Hungarian rule occasionally broke out. It was spasmodic and not responsibly led, but it was sufficient to provide a ground for the inclusion of the nationalist state of Slovakia in the propaganda of the allies to win the war in that part of Europe by creating the republic of Czechoslovakia and by crushing the Hapsburg Empire. It was thus decided—before the Treaty of Trianon was signed—that Slovakia should change the centre of its commercial and cultural gravitation from Budapest to Prague.

This collection of essays, of which by far the most important is that by Dr. Seton Watson himself, deals with the progress of Slovakia as a part of the Czechoslovakian republic. There does not seem to be ground for denying that very real efforts have been made from Prague to reverse the Magyar policy of dominating Slovakia, by putting in its place a democratic policy of Slovakian development. The position is, however, complicated by a new minority question. The Czech population of Slovakia is so inconsiderable as to be not worth mentioning, while as many as one quarter of the most energetic citizens of Slovakia and nearly all the inhabitants of the big towns of Bratislava and Kosice are Magyars. This population is naturally reluctant to give up its connection with Budapest and to encourage the exchange of German-Hungarian cultural habits for the less conspicuously valuable Slav-Slovak cultural habits.

Those who read Dr. Seton Watson's essay will leave it with the impression that though the premise for separating Slovakia from Hungary may not be justifiable there is much to be said for Czech methods as compared with Hungarian methods, and sympathy is needed with Czechoslovakia in the present difficulties. The effect of another change as an outcome of treaty revision would be a reversal of all the delicate adjustments at the moment going on. It would mean a confession of failure and a new attempt to build up a castle with stones taken from a foundation already discarded. The greatest need of Slovakia is clearly a prolonged period of peace and organisation; under whose regime this is achieved *ought* to be a matter of minor importance.

R. G. RANDALL.

PANEGYRIC AND WHITEWASH

Lyautey of Morocco. By SONIA E. HOWE. Hodder and Stoughton. 20s.

Hubert Lyautey won his spurs in Cochin China, established his reputation in Madagascar under General Gallieni, and took over the great task of his life—the adminstration of Morocco—in 1903. His policy has never varied; it is to make friends with unruly tribes, to cover the iron hand with a velvet glove, to do nothing ruthless unless he must. To Moor and Berber alike this is the ideal method. They worship strength, respect justice, despise weakness. Somewhere in the wild R'hamna country, years ago, a man driving a donkey loaded with salt responded to my civil salutation with a curse. "Why do you abuse me?" I asked. "Because I am only a poor man," he replied. "If I had power I would cut the throats of all Unbelievers. Curse your religion."

In a country full of men of this mind, administration must needs move warily, and Lyautey was so skilled that where he found enemies he left friends. He is a man of a kind that only France produces, for while our administrators seldom forget the colour bar, the French never notice it. "We are friendly to the men and behave gallantly to the women" was an illuminating remark once made in the writer's hearing.

It is when Miss Howe skilfully mingles the action of the Marshal in Morocco with the action of the French Government at home that she goes astray. When Lyautey was sent to the oases in the South-East of Morocco the French control of the country had already been decided in principle. From Tangier, Sir Arthur Nicolson, afterwards Lord Carnock, was working to this end; in Downing Street, our Foreign Office. The "swap," Egypt for Morocco, was arranged. The Moor suspected and disliked it, two Sultans at least would have welcomed a British protectorate. The great Kaids watched with growing indignation the corruption of the weak Abdul Aziz by the agents sent from Paris. The Grand Wazeer, Bu Hamed, had striven for years to keep Morocco inviolate; he went so far as to expel from the country the first motor car that entered it. There were "Holy Cities" to which no European might travel. In the North much of the Riff, in the South Tarudant and the Sus, were closed to travellers. But elsewhere the country was safe. You could travel hundreds of miles through the interior, the only premise being that you took a Moorish soldier and slept at night inside some village Zariba. The Moorish soldier carried a long flint-lock rifle, dangerous only to himself.

When the time came for a French move there were riots, there was bloodshed and there were terrible reprisals. Those of us who had gone about the country unarmed and unmolested knew perfectly well that these uprisings were planned. So did Jaurés, in Paris, who said what was in his mind. It was the old story over again. Just as France had taken Algeria and made a little trouble with the Kroumirs in Tunisia the excuse for annexing that country, so in the fullness of time she took Morocco—and, let it be said in all honesty, has justified her end though not her means. To-day the old Sultanate is comparatively safe for its

inhabitants; they are free from some of their worst oppressors. There are high roads and railroads in place of the tracks one followed thirty years ago. There are Courts of Justice, schools and hospitals, modern hotels. Ancient buildings have been preserved, new towns wisely planned. The intrigue, corruption and violence that established the French protectorate over Morocco have been in large measure atoned for. But if Miss Sonia Howe knew nothing of these things she was not qualified to write what purports to be a true story of the closing years of the last great African Empire; she would have done better to keep to her main theme. Marshal Lyautey can claim the plaudits of the conquerors, the conquered and the lookers-on, even those among the last named who, if only for the sake of India, would have preferred to see both sides of the Straits of Gibraltar under British guard. The book presents the finished picture of one of the world's great men, and should appeal to all interested in the recovery of the continent that has ceased to justify the old familiar adjective "dark." It achieves the writer's purpose effectively even though without distinction. S. L. B.

SHORTER NOTICES

An Oxford Note-Book. By A. L. MAYCOCK. Blackwood. 10s. 6d.

There is something in the general appearance of this volume which suggests a guide-book for the use of American tourists who are desirous of visiting the Oxford colleges. Actually, besides college architecture, the author has allowed himself many digressions—mediæval Oxford, the present position of the University—which are conducted in a singularly pleasant style, rambling but not unnecessarily diffuse. Engravings from Ingram's *Memorials of Oxford* illustrate the sober piety of the whole production.

The White Gods. By RICHARD FRIEDENTHAL. Heinemann. 10s. 6d.

This is a carefully coloured account of Cortez's conquest of Mexico, with Marina, the Indian mistress of the conquistador, for heroine. The whole narrative has obviously been most conscientiously put together from the correct sources, yet it fails to give a more plausible, more exciting or more illuminating reconstruction of the scene and its great actor than we get from Prescott or from Cortez's own excellent letters. And why should the solemn author play ducks and drakes with Cortez and history at the end? The second voyage is abolished, the expedition to Honduras is ignored, and Cortez is perfunctorily shown dying at sea on his way to the Azores when actually he died in his bed in a village near Seville. One would forgive this poetic licence if the novel called for it, but it does not.

About Motoring

THE MOTOR CAR AND TARIFFS

IT is rather surprising that the motor industry has not utilised the present emergency and an enormous Tory majority in Parliament to press for prohibitive tariffs on imported motor cars. Several rival manufacturing countries erect such towering tariff walls against imported motor cars that their home factories enjoy an almost complete monopoly. France and America are the principal apostles of this creed. In both countries, as indeed in several other European territories, nationals very rarely own motor vehicles of any foreign make. The usual exceptions are fantastically rich people, some of whom adopt the craziest methods of advertising their wealth. I yield to no man in my admiration for the finest British cars, which may be catalogued at £3,000 with suitable coachwork. But if I were a Paris or New York millionaire, I should be content to drive the best cars of my native land—a Packard, a Delage, or a Renault. I should not pay £3,000 (catalogue price) plus £1,350 customs duty plus ocean freights and insurance in order to own a British car, which may be fractionally superior to any other car in the world, but at such an artificial price is quite unpardonably dear. The cheaper American mass-production cars are so phenomenally cheap in their country of origin that they can hop over most tariff walls; and a sprinkling of Essex, Chevrolet, Buick, Studebaker, Ford and other similar vehicles can be identified in the car park outside any popular French restaurant in the luncheon hour. Thanks to her enormous production America can sell four-cylinders at £80, good six-cylinders of full size at £120, and 75 m.p.h. eight-cylinders at £140. The Continental nations, with certain exceptions, have never been wholly logical, and erected a 100 per cent. or 200 per cent. tariff against such vehicles in order to exclude them completely. They have astutely allowed them to enter at tariffs of 45 per cent. or so, under which handicap they sold enough cars to create a demand. In many instances this demand justified the erection of a local factory, and provided employment for nationals.

I do not pretend to be an economist, and so far as the British market is concerned my interest in motor car tariffs pivots chiefly on their technical aspects. Under more than one Conservative Government I have trembled lest a duty so stiff as to exclude all foreign cars should be imposed. There was a time when the industry lacked the brains and energy to develop real efficiency under any pressure less than that imposed by fierce competition from outside. We entered the motor industry rather late, allowing France and Germany to steal a long start. We made up our leeway under the old regime, when a small staff laboriously constructed single cars at a high price on ridiculously costly lines. Then America introduced mass production, and the old men and the vested interests showed themselves completely unadaptable for years. Most of these stupid concerns have now been put out of business by men like Morris and Austin and Bullock. In spite of the serious economic handicap imposed by Free Trade (in this industry) and in spite of the incredible problems of suiting mass production methods to a small nation with a limited buying public; in spite of the high wages and short working day and comparatively leisurely working methods characteristic of British labour, our more lively factories have triumphed over all their intrinsic problems up to the present time. If the economists ever decide that changed conditions justify exclusive tariffs, the British industry contains sufficient inspiration to survive the loss of foreign stimuli. Perhaps venom is quite as efficient a spur as pure genius; and some of our leading manufacturers hate each other so fiercely that there is not the very least fear of stagnation. Engineers who discuss motor car tariffs on technical lines have been known to say that England is too small a country to maintain internal competition. In America, their theory goes, the buying public is so vast and the financial remuneration of designing a best seller is so colossal, that the various plants can be trusted to keep up vigorous competition in a closed market, so that American cars would never reach artificial prices, nor American design settle down into grooves. But in Britain, some

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of the critics aver, the result of an excluding tariff would be a giant merger. Prices would be forced up and inflated to the highest figure which a helpless public would stand. And design would become stereotyped and poor. It is written in Holy Writ that one day the leopard shall lie down with the kid; but even Holy Writ never foretold a day when the wolf and the leopard and the lion and the bear should forgather. And such a happy family is more probable than that several of the strong men of our motor industry should become joint co-directors of a giant merger, controlling the motor plants of this country. It is urged that the French motor industry is not too healthy, and that its comparative stagnation is ascribable to exclusive tariffs. I should agree that the cheap French motor car, despite the brilliant genius of M. Citroën, compares unfavourably with similar productions in Britain and America. This is probably ascribable to limited markets, for the French cars in the luxury class are as good as any in the world. Their cheap cars suffer to some slight extent because they do not possess any substantial export market. Their Colonial empire is not a good market for motor cars. Their home public are thrifty and prefer savings and investments to expenditure on pleasure, such as most British and American citizens adopt. Despite these obvious handicaps the best cheap French cars are not very far behind those of Britain or America. They may be less handsome and less liberally equipped: but mechanically they are almost in the same class.

The one country which enjoys practically complete exclusion of motor car imports is Italy, where the Fascists make life extremely unpleasant for anybody who owns a foreign car. Supposing that economists ever decide to exclude foreign cars from this country to a similar extent, there is no fear for our industry. If the empire markets are taken into consideration, the prizes of success are great enough to keep a sturdy individualism alive. The industry includes a host of strong and largely antipathetic personalities; and I should not have the least fear of a gigantic merger of the trade's resources, followed in due course by price inflation, stagnation in design, and lack of energy in expansion and development.

R. E. DAVIDSON.

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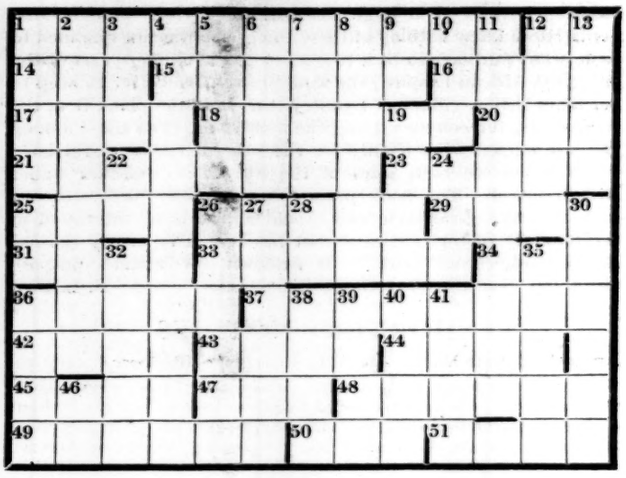

ASK EROS

ACROSS

1. Humour in a trunk.
12. 1½ in Frankfort.
14. I'd have followed the piper.
15. Tense.
16 *rev.* *'Arry's faithful steed.*
17. *We are rich, yet stony.*
18. King Robert's domain.
20. It's a little confused.
21. But where's the beer?
23. The mind of a good solver.
25. *Wilow.*
26. What to look for at Bournemouth.
29. Another good man gone wrong.
31. Here be untinned salmon.
33. The saint tends to deviate.
34. All among the barley.
36. Return of Lord Baden Powell.
37. The bath-water was
42. *A fellow's inside.*
43. Wary before expressing indebtedness.
44. They often have it.
45. *Too late, my dear Casca.*
47. Gay, but not a bachelor.
48 *rev.* Little darling.
49. Heard in the sheepfold.
50. Hot and bothered.
51. *Mamie's hurt.*

DOWN

1. *In and out of the Circus.*
2. Tottenham's favourite flower?
3. A summer with Degas.
4. Encountered by the Foreign Secretary's namesake.
5. The headless spectre "receives."
6. Italy goes off gold.
7. But it isn't, with the franc at 3d.
8 *rev.* Oppose.
9. No use to Mrs. Gamp.
10. Money turns up for the Marshal.
11. The nation's annual bugbear.
12. Soldiers ought clearly to wear it.
13. *The red and white had a dust-up.*
19. Fight in the bargain basement.
22. Reverse of 46.
24 *rev.* Tail's tale.
25. Unreformed calendar needed.
26. Penseur.
27. Marked down for destruction by the gods.
28. No calendar needed at all.
30. Last.
32. Nordic disarray.
35 *rev.* Remedy for tears.
36. Trial at the Oval.
38. Leave? Well, not quite.
39. Scene of the "Young" plan.
40. My China is troublesome.
41. *We've got 'em on toast.*
46. 1½ in Frankfort.

LAST WEEK'S CROSSWORD

ACROSS.—1. authoritative. 12. p(r)oem. 14. cane *rev.* 15. coon *rev.* 17. Ovid. 20. Edge. 21. caul. 22. ciliated. 25, 32. unsti-mulated. 26. sago *rev.* 27. tone. 28. tamer *rev.* 30. scrip *rev.*. 32. (see 25). 35. elari (Ariel). 37. ecstatic. 39. gate. 40. farmer. 41. ark *rev.* 42. entertaining. 44. statesmanlike.

DOWN.—1. apocope. 2, 39. ur-ges. 3. toil (Turl). 4. he. 5. red. 6, 10. ingen-ious. 7. eat *rev.* 8. accurate. 9. ten-ant *rev.* 10 (see 6). 11. Volta. 13. meats (steam). 16. critical. 18. vigilant. 19. discreet. 23. Tom. 24. delsmia (misdea!). 29. Met. 31. attar *rev.* 33. Marcu(s) *rev.* 34. "grid." 36. ifre (fire). 37. eats. 38. lira *rev.* 39. (see 2). 41. ink *rev.* 43. n(o)n.

THIS WEEK'S PUZZLE

"I won't sit next to Jones," said Robinson at the dinner-party. "Nor I next to Mr. Smith's wife," said Brown's. Jones's wife sat two places to his left; Brown had two ladies on each side of him; Robinson sat next-but-one to his wife, and Smith next-but-two to Miss Jones. Mrs. Jones sat between her son and daughter, and Mrs. Robinson between two men.

Show how the nine diners were seated, beginning with any one of them and going clockwise round the table.

LAST WEEK'S PUZZLE

United, 1: Villa, Nil. (Deduced from the fact that the Arsenal had secured three goal-less draws.)

I have pleasure in acknowledging a number of correct solutions.

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§*LESS* Income Tax abatement at 2s. in the £	3	14	10
Net annual cost	£33	13	6

§*Note. Although the abatement of Income Tax in respect of life assurance is NOW 2/6 in the £, it is considered fairer to present this estimate on the lower abatement at 2/- in the £, rather than on the abatement under the Emergency Budget.*

Total net cost over 25 years £841 17 6

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sum assured	£1,000	0	0
*Bonus, estimated at present rate of £2 2s. per cent. per annum ..	525	0	0
Total estimated sum receivable ..	£1,525	0	0
Deduct total net cost as shown above	841	17	6
PROFIT	£ 683	2	6

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THE WEEK IN THE CITY

BY TOREADOR.

AMERICA SEES IT THROUGH?—BANK FAILURES AND INFLATION —NEW ISSUES IN 1931—ELECTRICITY SUPPLY EQUITIES.

BREAKING records is a popular and pardonable craze in the United States. The Comptroller of Currency must have been a proud man when he submitted last week his annual report to the House of Representatives. He could point to a wonderful record number of bank smashes. During the twelve months ended October 31, 1931, no fewer than 2,342 American banks failed with aggregate deposits of $2,009 millions —over £400 millions at the par of exchange. Actually at the end of 1931 the bank receivers had in their hands not less than $2,500 millions of frozen assets. It is small wonder that the United States have so far found it very difficult to inflate. Bank failures reached their peak in October, but are still going on at a high rate. What else can be expected if securities held in their portfolios continue to depreciate in market value or if their customers persist in withdrawing their deposits and hoarding their money? A great effort, however, is now being made to stop the rot in the American banking system. President Hoover is pushing forward his Reconstruction Finance Corporation and a new Bill has been submitted to Congress, providing for the raising of $2,000 millions by the sale of Government bonds. Backed by Government finance the Reconstruction Finance Corporation is to operate very much on the lines of the old War Finance Corporation and is apparently to make loans to any deserving business concern which applies for help. At the same time Congress is to be recommended to give powers to the Federal Reserve Board to liberate funds "arrested" in the banks which have failed. Another Presidential suggestion is that Home Loan Discount Banks should be established as a necessary auxiliary to the Federal Reserve Banks in order to "relieve the present pressure on home and farm property owners and to give added strength to building societies, savings banks and deposit banks." This, surely, is the last, determined effort of the American authorities to inflate. Let us wish them God-speed.

* * *

Affairs in America have certainly reached a critical stage. One gathers from the noble, independent sentiments voiced by President Hoover to Congress that the Washington administration is thoroughly alarmed at the banking and trade situation. When the President declares: "The United States possess the resources and resilience to make a large measure of recovery independent of the rest of the world," we may be sure that he is very nervous of the effects of continued world depression and instability on the internal economy of his country. When Mr. Otto Kahn, the head of the famous banking firm of Kuhn-Loeb, tells the Senate Finance Committee: "The United States are amply able to maintain the gold standard. . . . There is nothing all the countries in the world can do which would get us off it," we may be certain that America is very near to dropping the gold standard. A more candid expression of American opinion is given by Mr. Parker Willis, a well-known banking expert, in his New Year's message to the *Financial News*: "The year 1932 is sure to be one of the most troublesome and hardest ever endured here. . . . It is entirely possible . . . to forecast with considerable sound argument many disasters, included among them further banking collapse, the abandonment of the gold standard, the extension of failures among institutions hitherto not touched by the epidemic. . . . All these things are possible and whether they will come or not depends largely on management."

* * *

President Hoover's management is not rated very high. Wall Street has so far expressed its scepticism by persistent liquidation and short-selling of stocks. Nevertheless, we must give the President credit for some obstinacy—or, more politely, the determination to carry his financial rehabilitation programme into effect. He has the support of all the bankers in his effort "to check further degeneration in prices and values." They may call it "anti-deflation," but with a deficit of $2,000 millions facing the Treasury in the current fiscal year, which can only be met in small part by fresh taxation, the road which leads to inflation is broad and easy. It would, of course, do much to help forward a world trade revival if the gold-standard countries, in particular the United States, *would* inflate. But that is not the only contribution which America could make towards a trade recovery. A finely constructive move would be to offer cancellation of the Allied war debts if the Allies cancelled German reparations and to offer a lowering of the American tariff wall if European countries agreed to do the same. The expert Advisory Committee appointed under the Young Plan have made it plain that the German problem is now largely responsible for the growing financial paralysis of the world, and that political and economic issues are now hopelessly interwoven. If America persists in behaving like an ostrich—burying its head in domestic sands at the sight of an approaching danger from abroad—it is a dismal outlook for the whole world.

* * *

The attenuated figures of new capital issues in 1931 bring home the hard times which City houses are suffering. A dying capital market means gradual starvation for most finance houses and Stock Exchange firms. Public issues of capital were almost entirely absent in the second half of 1931. According to the *Economist's* statistics the first six months yielded £89.2 millions and the second only £12.9 millions—a total of £102.1 millions as compared with £267.18 millions in 1930, £285.2 millions in 1929 and £369 millions in 1928. A similar story is told in New York—new issues for the first eleven months of 1931 having been $3,000 against $9,600 millions in the corresponding period of 1930. The feature of the reduced London total last year was the high proportion which went overseas—all in the first seven months of the year. Foreign countries took £9.1 and British possessions £38.5 millions—a total of £47.6 millions or over 46 per cent. India was the chief culprit. It is unfortunate that in a period of general financial strain the Imperial Government should have been called upon to finance its Indian Empire. No less than £21.6 millions of the 1931 London capital issues went to that disturbed country. Further loans will have to be made this year. There is plenty of money in India, but we are told that internal loans are out of the question. Could not the Indian Government issue rupee stock in exchange for hoarded gold, giving the benefit of the gold premium (in stock) to Indians who disgorge their private hoards and gold ornaments? The current movement of gold from India suggests that the gold-hoarder will be tempted at a price.

* * *

As a safe "hedge" against the risks of inflation in this country the cautious investor might consider buying the best electrical supply "equities." Of the provincial companies I would select Midland Counties, Clyde Valley and Newcastle-on-Tyne, although the two latter involve taking a view to some extent of the "heavy" industries. Of the companies surrounding London the County of London, North Metropolitan and Metropolitan Electric are an obvious choice. The companies coming wholly within the provisions of the London Electricity Act, 1925, are in a special class, but not unattractive. These are taken over by the Joint Electricity Authority in 1971, and from 1932 onwards are limited to dividends of 7 per cent. on their ordinary share capital and capitalised reserves plus any extra dividend arising out of "consumers' benefit." (If the charge to consumers is less than the fixed "standard rate," one-sixth of the difference can be distributed to ordinary shareholders, if profits are available.) The "consumers' benefit" may bring the dividends in some cases up to 10 per cent. eventually. The present market prices, dividends and yields returnable on the ordinary shares of the companies named are as follows:

	High 1931.	Present Price.	Div. Rate %.	Yield %.
Clyde Valley, £1	35/6	30/9	8	£5 4 1
Midland Counties, £1	29/3	26/–	7	5 7 8
Newcastle-upon-Tyne, £1	25/9	22/9	6	5 5 6
County of London, £1	49/9	43/6	11	5 1 2
Metropolitan Electric, £1	42/6	37/–	10	5 8 1
North Metropolitan, £1	49/6	41/9	10	4 15 10

The County of London and Metropolitan Electric have subsidiaries operating under the London Electricity Act, but it is not expected that the present rates of distribution of the parent companies will be affected. The consumption of electricity is still showing an increase in most areas over that of twelve months ago, but the rate of increase is slowing down, and the 1931 reports of the leading companies will probably begin to mention the slump.

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CAMBRIDGE.	ELIZABETH of ENGLAND.	Th., S.
GLOBE.	AND SO TO BED.	Wed. & Sat.
HIPPODROME.	BOW BELLS.	Daily.
LYRIC.	AUTUMN CROCUS.	Wed. & Sat.
PHŒNIX.	COUNSEL'S OPINION.	Wed. & Sat.
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